

HASSAN IN EGYPT



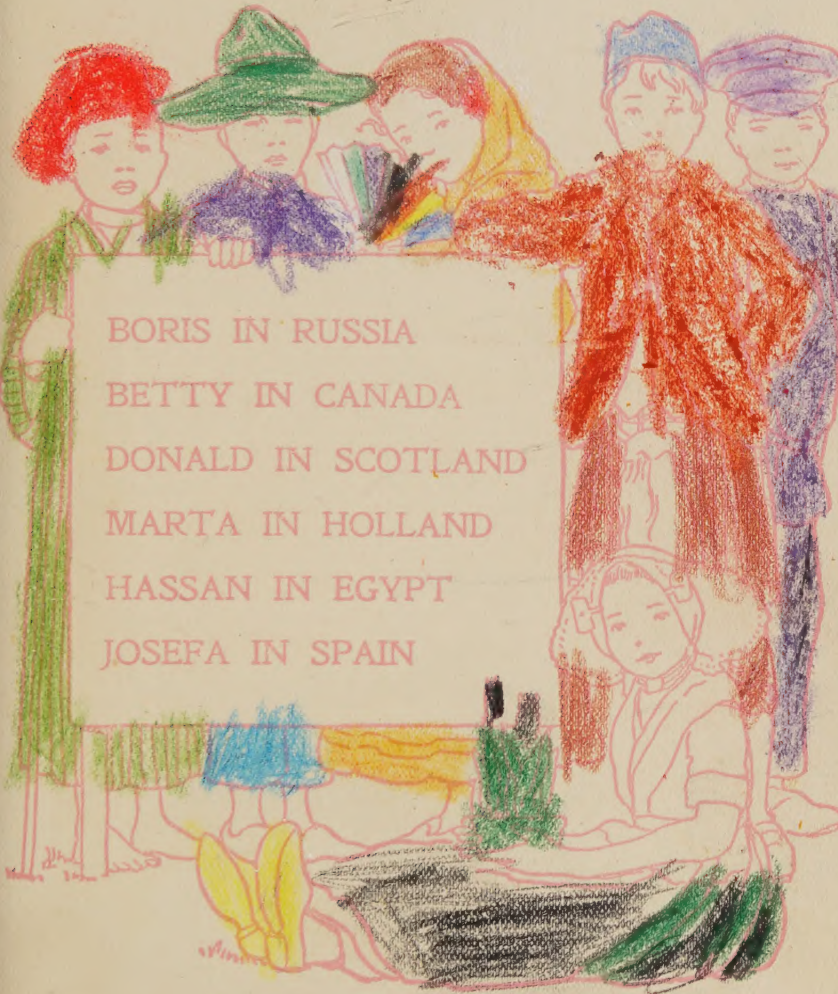
LITTLE PEOPLE
EVERYWHERE

Harry Millican
From Carl Lindsay

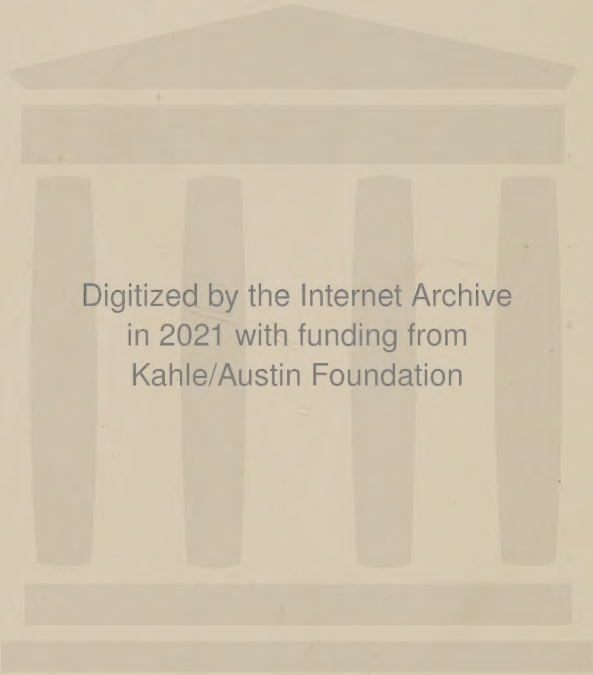
LITTLE PEOPLE



EVERYWHERE.

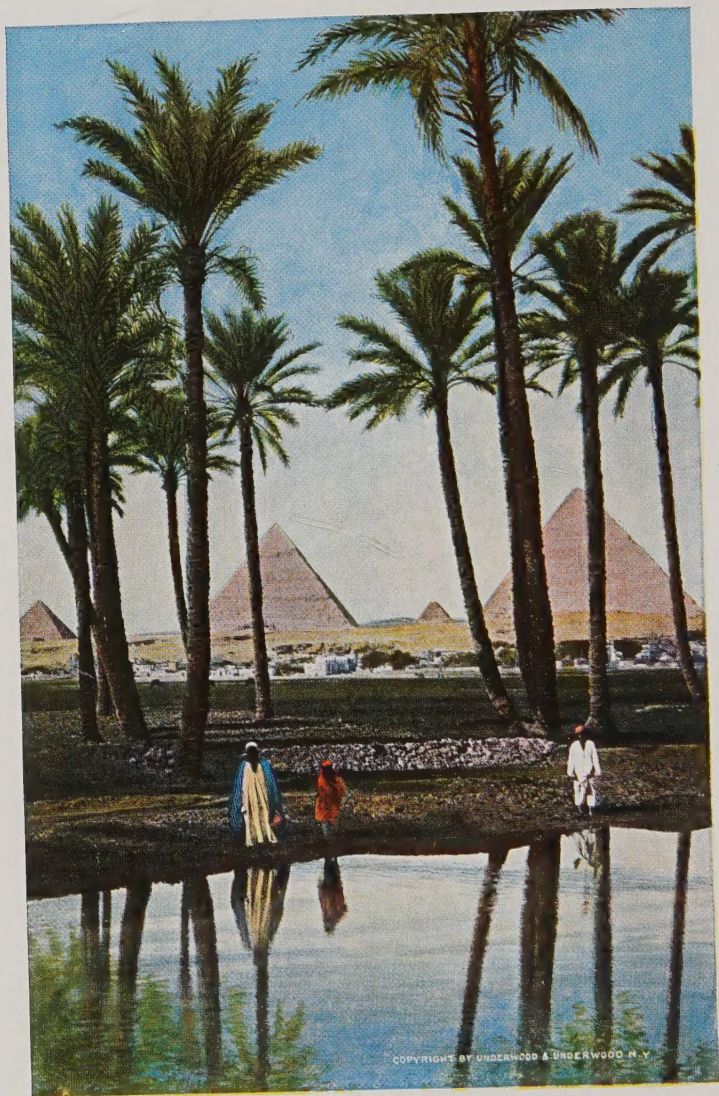
A group of six children are depicted in various costumes. From left to right: a girl with red hair in a green dress; a boy in a green hat and purple coat; a girl in a yellow headscarf and blue dress; a boy in a blue cap and orange fur coat; and a boy in a purple cap and blue uniform. In the foreground, a girl in a white dress and headscarf is sitting on the ground. They are all looking towards the camera.

BORIS IN RUSSIA
BETTY IN CANADA
DONALD IN SCOTLAND
MARTA IN HOLLAND
HASSAN IN EGYPT
JOSEFA IN SPAIN



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Merry Christmas.
to
Harry from Carl.



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THE GREAT PYRAMIDS

LITTLE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

HASSAN IN EGYPT

A GEOGRAPHICAL READER

BY ETTA BLAISDELL McDONALD

Joint Author of "Boy Blue and His Friends,"

"The Child Life Readers," etc.

AND JULIA DALRYMPLE

Author of "Little Me Too," "The Make-Believe Boys," etc.



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PREFACE

EGYPT is the Nile River with its fertile valley. On either side is the vast desert of golden sand, traversed by camel-trains that come down to the river from the distant oases. Here, for thousands of years, the Egyptians have dwelt beside their great life-giving river, depending upon its annual flood for their food and water. In this narrow valley ancient kings and Pharaohs built their famous cities, and here their tombs lie buried in the sand, holding priceless treasures in their record of bygone centuries. Here the Arabs came in conquest, and here, to-day, Copt and Moslem dwell in peace, the bells of the Christian church mingling their music with the muezzin's call to prayer.

To understand Egypt and the life of the people we must see the Nile at its flood, explore the ruins of the ancient temples, traverse the glaring sand of the desert, see the sunrise and the sunset, and spend long golden hours under the cloudless Egyptian sky.

In this story of Hassan in Egypt we may live for a while in the "oasis of roses," journey to Cairo, sail up the wonderful Nile River, stopping here and there to visit the ruins of some ancient city, see the great dam which the English have built at Assuan, and then suddenly catch a glimpse of a mirage, a vision of home, which sends us hurrying back from this land of golden sunshine.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. HIGH NILE	I
II. FATHER AND SON	7
III. "THE OASIS OF ROSES"	14
IV. THE LITTLE RED CAMEL	18
V. A GREEN AND RED DOOR	24
VI. MA'AS SALAMA!	30
VII. AN UNLUCKY DAY	37
VIII. HASSAN IS LOST	45
IX. ON THE NILE	50
X. RAMESES THE GREAT	57
XI. FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO	62
XII. PICTURE WRITING	68
XIII. THE POTTER'S BOY	74
XIV. HASSAN'S NEW TUNIC	81
XV. THE GREAT DAM	88
XVI. A MIRAGE IN THE DESERT	95
XVII. PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT	102

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The Great Pyramids <i>Frontispiece in Color</i>	
The Clustering Mud-houses of the Little Village	5
A Street in Cairo	27
On the Bank of the Nile	46
Women and Boys with Water-jars	56
The Colossi of Memnon	81
Among the Ruins of Thebes	82
The Pyramid of Cheops and the Sphinx	103
The Road to the Great Pyramids	108

HASSAN IN EGYPT

CHAPTER I

HIGH NILE

It was New Year's Day in Egypt. "Nerûs Day" little Hassan called it, as he sat on the back of his camel and looked off over the broad river that sparkled in the golden sunshine.

The day was already far gone. It was nine hours since his father's train of heavily-loaded camels had left the warehouse back in the Fayoum. Now the great crates of ripe dates had been transferred to the deck of a river boat, and a load of bottles — tiny phials traced with gold — had been packed on the camels' backs.

It was time to begin the homeward journey across the burning sands of the desert; yet Ibrahim Ali, the owner of the caravan, turned for a last word with the Arabs on the boat.

It had fallen on Thursday, this tenth day of September, the first day of the year in Egypt, and a happy day it was for little Hassan.

There was the bustle and excitement of the start from home at daybreak, the journey across the

desert in the early morning hours, the loading and unloading of the camels, and, best of all, the sight of the great river, which is always at its flood at the beginning of the year.

While his father talked with a group of merchants, Hassan sat contentedly on the back of his camel, playing with a new toy which he held in his slender brown hand and watching the strange sights on the river.

It was a busy scene. Market boats were crowded along the bank, waiting for their freight of onions, grain, sugar-cane and cotton, and the air was filled with the shouts of donkey-boys and camel-drivers who were urging their heavily-laden animals down to the boats.

Now and then a felucca swept by, its enormous sail spread out to catch the wind. Black-robed women passed down to the river to fill their water-jars. Little boys plunged into the stream or chased each other along the shore, and white-turbaned Arabs sat idly watching the loading and unloading of the boats.

“Peace be with you, O little Hassan!”

It was one of the merchants who spoke. At the words the boy lifted his right hand to his heart and forehead in the courteous Arabic form of greeting, and answered: “On you be peace and the blessing of Allah.”

Hassan's father turned at the sound of his son's voice.

"The morning is most happy for Hassan, O Abdu Effendi," he said with a smile. "The boy has to-day, for the first time in his life, seen our great Father Nile."

At that moment a man came running toward them across the fields. "Peace be on you all!" he cried. "The Nile is at its height. Twenty-eight feet has it risen this year. They have telegraphed the news from Cairo, and there is great rejoicing."

"Allah be praised!" the men said to each other, and they fell to talking about the wonderful river which has flooded its valley since time began, bringing fertility to the desert sands and prosperity to the people.

"It is no longer as it was in the days of Joseph, the son of Jacob," said one of the men. "We need have no more fear of seven lean years, with famine for ourselves and our cattle."

"Joseph was a far-seeing man in his time," spoke Hassan's father. "He led the waters of the Nile across the desert through the Bahr Yusuf which still bears his name, and to this canal we owe the beautiful oasis of the Fayoum where I dwell and where my fathers dwelt before me."

He looked at his son as he spoke, as if he would

add the wish that his own children and his children's children should live there also after his time.

"How is it in your business, Ibrahim Ali?" asked the merchant Abdu. "Do you flood your rose gardens with the Nile water?"

"My roses would spoil under water," was the answer; "but the gardens have been irrigated from the canal these many weeks, and we shall soon be ready to fill these bottles with rose water.

"The canal is sometimes put to other uses than irrigation," he continued. "This son of mine has a liking for boats, and last year we made a little lake where he might sail them."

"I have a whole fleet of boats at my home," Hassan said proudly; and leaning down from his seat on the camel's back he held out his new toy, that the merchant might see it more plainly.

It was a model of one of the Nile boats, — a lateen-sailed felucca, which is used to ferry passengers across the river, or to carry produce from one town to another.

"I shall sail this boat with the others on the canal," said Hassan. Then his dark face lighted with a sudden thought and he added eagerly: "Now that it is High Nile, perhaps another lake will grow for me beyond the rose gardens, where I can sail my boats all day."

His father smiled indulgently. "We will go



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"THE CLUSTERING MUD-HOUSES OF THE LITTLE VILLAGE"

Page 5

home and see what can be done about a lake," he said, and turning to the leader of the camel-train he made a sign that they should start.

Immediately the drivers gave the word, one to another, and one of the men led up a camel so that the master might take his seat in the saddle.

With many groans and complaints the beast knelt awkwardly on the ground, twisting his long neck to see his rider safely seated. Then he rose with such a lurching motion that Hassan's father was tossed backward and forward as a boat is tossed by a great wave of the sea.

The camels had already been led down to the river to drink their fill of the muddy water. Now, at the commands of their drivers, they separated from the crowd and were driven into a long line, one behind another.

Hassan and his father rode at the head of the line. The boy's camel was decorated with bright-colored trappings, and a fringe of coins, hanging from a metal chain around its neck, jingled and jangled right merrily.

As they passed out of sight of the clustering mud houses of the little village, and wound their way slowly across the great desert, the man and the boy chatted together. Hassan asked many questions and his father told curious tales of Egypt and the Nile.

“ Did the river always rise and fall in the same way before I was born, O Father? ” asked the boy, as they left the Nile far behind them.

“ Always,” was the answer.

“ And will it do so after I am finished? ”

“ Always,” repeated Ibrahim Ali.

“ Why? ” Hassan queried.

“ My son,” his father replied, as a good Moslem should, “ because it is the will of Allah.”

CHAPTER II

FATHER AND SON

It was the hour of sunset. In the courtyard of Ibrahim Ali could be heard the cooing of doves, the droning songs of idle women, and the happy sound of children's voices at their play.

Suddenly, from the minaret of the mosque beyond the courtyard, came the call of the muezzin, the words of his song rising and falling on the still evening air: "Come to prayer! Allah is great! There is no god but Allah! Come to prayer!"

"Peace, Amina," said Hassan quickly; "it is time for the sunset prayer."

The women ceased their songs, the very doves hushed their sound of cooing.

Little Amina, Hassan's six-year-old sister, dropped the doll with which she had been playing. Curling herself into a round ball, her bare brown feet hidden under her robe, her tiny brown hands clasped within her flowing sleeves, she fixed wondering eyes upon her brother as he knelt and bowed his forehead to the ground.

Presently the voice from the minaret ceased its call, and the women began to move about in the

courtyard, gathering up a robe here, a toy there, a pair of little red sandals, or a fly-switch that lay where the master of the house might wish to step.

Hassan rose from the ground and turned his face away from distant Mecca, bringing his thoughts back to the little sister who had taken no part in the prayers.

It was a week since the boy had travelled with his father across the desert to the great river, and a little lake had indeed appeared beyond the rose gardens, where he could sail his boats all day. But now the tiny boats which had sailed so bravely on the broad sheet of water were floating idly in the basin of the fountain.

Amina took her doll from the ground and placed it in one of the boats. Then she looked up at her brother with pouting lips. "Will our father never teach me the words of the prayer?" she asked.

Hassan shook his head. "Girls have no need to learn the prayers," he said, "although it is not forbidden by the Koran.

"Now that my father is teaching me the prayers I shall learn also the chapters of the blessed Koran," he added. "Soon I shall be a man, and no longer have to stay in the harem with the women. My father has already begun to take me with him when he rides on his journeys."

Little Amina's head drooped and tears stood in

her big black eyes. She felt sad and lonely at so suddenly losing her playmate.

"I can pray without being taught," she said. "And I shall ask Allah to send a sister to play with me always." Then she knelt suddenly on her chubby knees and bumped her soft forehead to the ground in imitation of her brother's prayers.

One of the women passed the fountain, her hands filled with toys gathered from the bench under the sycamore tree in the center of the courtyard.

"Come, little Amina," she called, waiting for her at the foot of the staircase which led to the rooms of the harem; "you must go to bed now, even as the doves have already gone."

The child rose and obeyed the call, but she looked back, as she climbed the stairs, and saw her brother run toward the gateway to meet his father.

With Ibrahim Ali there was a stranger, who paused in the deep gateway at a signal from the master, and there the two men waited until the woman and girl had disappeared through the doorway at the head of the stairs.

Hassan saw that this stranger was dressed in foreign clothing, and for a moment he longed to run after his sister; but his father called him, and he greeted both men politely, touching his right hand to his forehead, lips and heart.

“ May your evening be happy,” said the stranger courteously.

“ May your evening be happy and blessed,” replied Hassan. Then, at a sign from his father, he clapped his hands and a servant appeared, bringing a basin and a jar of water.

The stranger washed the dust from his hands and face, filling the basin to the brim; but Ibrahim Ali held his hands while the servant poured the water slowly over them, for no Moslem ever washes in any but running water.

“ Now, if you please, we will break our fast and slake our thirst,” said Ibrahim Ali. “ We Moslems drink no wine, but you will like the good Nile water. There is nothing better in the world. We have an old Arabic proverb that ‘ He who drinks Nile water will return.’ ”

So saying, he led the way to a big square room which opened directly from the courtyard, and offered his guest a seat on a low divan covered with beautiful rugs.

“ It is the month of Ramadan with us,” he said, as they took their seats. “ During the whole month, from sunrise to sunset, not a bite of food nor a drop of water passes our lips. When the sun sets we do not care to wait very long for our dinner.”

He clapped his hands and called the servants to

bring dinner, and a fly-switch, in order that the food might be eaten in peace.

“ May not the boy eat with us? ” the stranger asked; but the master of the house shook his head. “ It is the boy’s place to see that we are served,” he said.

And all through the long meal Hassan stood beside his father, while the servants came and went, removing the soup and bringing potted meats and stewed vegetables.

Ibrahim Ali paid no attention to his son, but the guest — a jolly-looking young Englishman — watched him, surprised at his patience. When at last a delicious jelly, decorated with almonds and rose-petals, was placed on the tray which served for a table, he looked to see if the boy were not tempted to taste it; but Hassan only held his shapely head a little higher and set his lips more closely together.

Then the Englishman laughed outright. “ Are all Egyptian lads as strong-willed as Hassan here? ” he asked.

“ We teach our boys to show respect and deference to their elders,” replied his host. “ Doubtless it is the same all over the world.”

The stranger laughed again. “ I know no hungry English lad who would wait so patiently for his dinner,” he said.

"It is in the teaching of the blessed Koran," answered Ibrahim Ali courteously. Then he drew his son to his side, enfolding him with his wide-sleeved arm. "Speak," he said, "and tell us why you take pleasure in serving your father and his guest."

Hassan answered at once, speaking in English, but with a quaint, foreign accent. "The Koran teaches us that every step taken for the sake of a guest is a step in the ascent of Paradise," he said.

Ibrahim Ali nodded his turbaned head. "I have much land, hundreds of fruitful acres here in the Fayoum, the most fertile province in all Egypt," he said. "I have built warehouses and factories, and every year I send long camel-trains loaded with cotton, sugar, rose water, dates, oranges, olives, and other produce, to the markets of Cairo.

"I pay the government a great tax for my wells and my groves of date-palms, and I am counted a rich man among my people; but above all else I have a priceless possession in this son of mine, who will be an honor to my beard and name."

"It is said that you have a daughter also," suggested the Englishman.

"Yes, yes," answered Ibrahim quickly; "but she is not as a son, although she is a comely child enough. Allah is good in granting me this son. I

can name my ancestors — father and father's father — back to the prophet Abraham, and I, myself, shall be known as Abou Hassan, the father of Hassan, by my children's children. Praise be to Allah! ”

As he spoke, he rose from the divan and motioned to the servants to bring the basin and jar of water, that he might wash after eating.

Then he led the way to the courtyard, and Hassan took his place before the low table, glad enough that his long day's fast might at last be broken.

CHAPTER III

“THE OASIS OF ROSES”

ALL the long sunny hours of the morning Hassan played in the rose gardens. The roses were in full bloom, acres and acres of them, — delicate pink blossoms nodding on slender stems, gorgeous red roses peeping out from their green leaves, and roses that were velvety yellow with hearts of gold.

Men and boys were at work in the gardens, picking the fragrant blossoms and piling them high in tall baskets which they carried on their heads to a hut across the fields. Here the roses were crushed, and the juices made into the rose water and the attar of roses for which Ibrahim Ali's gardens were famous.

When the bright noonday sun shone down out of the cloudless sky, and no breath of wind stirred the hot air, the men ceased their labor and lay down in the shade of the wall to rest; but it was still the month of Ramadan, and no drop of water, no bite of food, could they have until the sun had dropped out of sight beyond the distant hills.

Hassan curled himself up on the ground and shut his eyes from the blinding glare of the sun. The

bees hummed drowsily about their work of gathering honey, and the voices of the men grew fainter and fainter in his ears until at last he fell asleep.

Little Amina woke him in mid-afternoon, and begged him to go with her to the grove of date-palms to get some leaves for a basket she was weaving; but even there it was hot, for the date-palms give little shade.

The date-palm, which grows best where there is no rain, is the most useful tree in Egypt, and the harvesting of the crop is an important event. The trees grow straight and tall, losing their lowest ring of branches every year, and holding their leaves and blossoms high up above the ground, where they will get all the heat of the sun. The men who climb the tall trunks to pick the fruit look like monkeys climbing a pole.

A single tree bears from one hundred to two hundred pounds of fruit at a time. The dates are picked when they are ripe and are sewn up in palm-leaf baskets and packed in crates. Then they are sent down to the Nile and shipped to Cairo and Alexandria, and thence to all parts of the world.

The Arabs say that a woman can serve her husband with a different dish of dates every day for a month. The date-pits are ground up and fed to the cows and sheep. The branches are used like rattan to make beds, tables, chairs, cradles, or bird-

cages. The leaves are used for fans and baskets, and the fiber of the bark is made into rope.

"Look, Amina," said Hassan, when they reached the grove, "here are the ropes left by the date-pickers. I am going to climb this young tree and see if I can find some dates."

"O Hassan," begged his sister, "please, please stay here with me. Our father will be angry if he finds you up in one of the palm trees. It is safer to climb the sycamore tree in the courtyard."

But her brother was already half way up the trunk, pushing with his legs, pulling with his arms, and hauling himself up a little now and then with one of the ropes.

The rough bark scratched his legs and made his hands bleed; but he paid no more heed to it than to Amina's pleading, and when he took his seat just below the stiff green leaves, in a rope noose left by the date-pickers, and looked off at the surrounding country, he felt well paid for his effort.

"I can see the men working in the rose gardens," he called down to his sister; "and I can see the Bahr Yusuf and all the little canals. They make the gardens look like a big chessboard."

The Bahr Yusuf is the oldest canal in the whole world. It is called "River of Joseph" because it was Joseph, the son of Jacob, who sent men to dig the canal, thus making the Fayoum one of the

richest provinces of Egypt. The “ oasis of roses ” is like a beautiful green island in a great ocean of golden sand.

As Hassan looked off across the fertile oasis, he could see fields of flax, cotton, sugar-cane and corn; and long rows of fruit trees, — figs, peaches, oranges and lemons. Cows were feeding in the meadows, and a shepherd was driving a flock of sheep along the bank of the canal.

“ Look, Amina! ” he called again, “ I will throw down this rope and pull you up beside me. You can play you are a pigeon learning to fly.”

Amina began to whimper. “ I must go back to the harem,” she said. “ Come down, and I will ask our mother to tell us a new story.”

But Hassan, from his perch in the tree, had just discovered something much more interesting than a new story. Far away on the yellow sand of the desert he could see a Bedouin driving a small herd of camels. He was moving slowly toward the village, where he would no doubt try to sell some of his animals.

“ Perhaps my father will buy me a camel for my very own,” thought the boy, and he clambered down out of the tree and hurried off to meet the camel-trader, leaving his sister to find her way back to the harem all alone.

CHAPTER IV

THE LITTLE RED CAMEL

JUST as the setting sun shed its rosy light across the fairy forests of sugar-cane, Hassan came home to find his father, bringing with him the camel-trader and his herd of camels.

Tucking his small brown hand into his father's larger one, he looked up into the dark face with pleading eyes.

"My father," he begged, "please buy for me the little red camel. It is young and its hump is still soft enough to make a good seat."

Before Ibrahim Ali could reply, the muezzin called from the minaret of the village mosque: "Come to prayer! Allah is great. Come to prayer!" and, everything else forgotten, the merchant, his son and the camel-trader turned toward the east and bowed their heads in prayer.

Five times each day does the good Mohammedan make his prayer to Allah; at sunrise, noonday and mid-afternoon, at sunset and again at nightfall, a million pairs of eyes are turned toward Mecca, a million prayers float up to Heaven.

When their prayers were ended, Hassan turned again to his pleading. "My father," he urged, "please buy the little red camel for me."

But with the nightfall Ibrahim Ali was still objecting to the trader's price, and the trader was still firmly shaking his head and declaring that to sell his beasts for the sum the merchant offered would be giving them away.

Hassan fell asleep to the sound of the haggling voices, and when he waked up before sunrise, there were his father and the trader in the courtyard, again at their bargaining.

But when the call sounded for the sunset prayers once more, the Bedouin was on his way across the desert, smiling at the price he had received for six of his camels, and Ibrahim Ali was laughing over the good bargain he had made.

"My son," he said, "remember to give only half what a camel-trader asks for his beasts. A day spent in bargaining is a day well spent, if in the end you give your own price. The camels are young and strong, and are worth all that I paid for them. They are just what I need for my pilgrimage to Mecca."

Hassan had commanded his own new camel to kneel, and he was just climbing into the saddle on the soft round hump when he heard his father's words.

"To Mecca!" he cried. "Are you going to Mecca?"

But the camel, feeling the weight on his back, sprang to his feet, tossing the boy backward so suddenly that he lost his hold and rolled to the ground. In another moment he was lying under the animal's heavy, padded foot, still and bleeding, his question unanswered and forgotten.

Ibrahim Ali carried his son into the house and held him in his arms until a doctor came and brought the boy back to consciousness.

"Let him stay quietly in the harem with his mother," the doctor advised, after stitches had been taken and bandages had been applied. "Before another moon he will be ready to climb on the camel's back again."

"Allah be praised," said Ibrahim Ali thankfully. "I thought to give up my pilgrimage to Mecca and stay at home to mourn for a lost son."

"Say not so," replied the doctor. "Make your pilgrimage to Mecca when the time comes, and rejoice over a son alive and well."

When the doctor was gone, Ibrahim Ali lifted up his son and carried him to the harem, calling to the mother to watch over him while he slept.

The mother, — a pretty, gentle-looking girl-mother with lustrous black eyes and soft rolls of black hair, — crept quietly into the room and

knelt beside the couch, stroking the boy's hands and whispering to him to lie still and go to sleep.

But Hassan had two questions to ask before he could sleep. "My father," he said, "when are you going to Mecca, and will you take me with you?"

There was no need to explain to Hassan the meaning of the pilgrimage, nor to tell him where the famous city lies. Since he was a tiny child he had seen his father turn his face toward the east to say his prayers, and he knew that far away in the land of Arabia, beyond the Red Sea, was Mecca, the birthplace of the great Mohammed.

He had seen caravans pass through the Fayoum on their way to worship at the prophet's shrine, and he had been told that every true follower of Mohammed must make one such pilgrimage in his life. To hear his father speak of journeying to the wonderful city filled his heart with joy, and he waited eagerly to be told that he was to go also.

"I shall begin the journey by going to Cairo as soon as we have celebrated the feast of Bairam," Ibrahim answered briefly; but he stopped without replying to the second question.

The lesser feast of Bairam follows the fast of Ramadan, and for three days there is great rejoicing, with gifts of toys for the children, and with feasting and dancing for their elders.

Little Amina, who had knelt on the floor cushions

at the farther end of the room, frightened and crying, crept forward at the mention of Bairam, for she remembered the happiness of the year before, and the toys and sweetmeats that her mother had given her. But even the thought of toys could not take Hassan's mind from the journey out into the wonderful unknown world that lay between him and Mecca.

"Am I going with you?" he repeated, and he put out his hand impatiently to grasp his father's robe.

For answer his father shook his head slowly. "There is cholera on the road between Cairo and Mecca, and also in the holy city itself," he said. "Allah has been good to me and spared your life when I thought that you were killed by the camel's hoofs. How shall I dare to risk that life a second time by taking you to Mecca?"

Then if the Englishman had been there he would have seen that Egyptian boys are not always self-controlled, for Hassan suddenly lifted up his voice in a shriek of disappointment. When his father and mother pleaded with him, and begged him to be quiet lest he make his wounds bleed anew, he tore at his father's robe and struck at his mother, until little Amina crept back among her cushions and cried aloud in terror.

In the end the lovely girl-mother sent a servant

for the ink-horn and a reed pen, and she went herself to get a bowl and some fresh water.

Ibrahim Ali wrote a text from the Koran on the inside of the bowl, then he poured in the water and stirred it with a spoon, reciting as he did so the verses from the Koran that speak of loving obedience.

When the words were all washed off, he held Hassan in his arms while the mother poured the inky water down the boy's throat, for in no other way, they thought, could they cure his fit of temper. Once before they had tried this remedy, when Hassan was ill with some child's disease, and they felt sure that it had saved his life.

So, even now, either the ink-and-water words, or the text from the holy book, or it may be the child's own weakness, for he was really badly hurt, sent him into a stupor. After a little while he became quiet and fell asleep.

Then Amina was also put to bed, and in the stillness of the night, while Ibrahim Ali watched over his sleeping son, he spoke with his wife about the pilgrimage.

"I shall take Hassan to Cairo, where he may live for three months in the house of my brother Yusuf," he said. "There he will see new sights, and forget to grieve for us, and you and Amina shall go with me to Mecca."

CHAPTER V

A GREEN AND RED DOOR

THE morning that saw Hassan's mother and sister start on their way to Cairo was exactly like all the mornings in Egypt, — drenched with golden sunshine. But the boy looked enviously at Amina, and felt that the joy of the day was veiled for him, even as her bright little face was veiled, for his sister was to have the pleasure of journeying to Mecca while he must stay behind.

Hassan pouted and was slow in waving farewell to the nodding heads that leaned from the palanquin; but Amina lifted her veil and kissed her hand to him until her mother drew her back, behind the curtains.

It was an exciting day for the little girl, with all kinds of new experiences. First she had been dressed in a long robe exactly like her mother's, with a lovely white veil which covered her face and hung almost to her feet, hiding all but her eyes from the gaze of any man they might chance to meet.

Then she was lifted up into the palanquin on the back of a camel, when always before she had

ridden on a little white donkey; and now she was to travel off across the desert with her mother and their attendants at the head of a long camel-train.

Hassan turned sadly toward the courtyard as the last camel disappeared beyond the grove of date-palms; but Ibrahim Ali laid his hand lovingly on his son's shoulder and tried to comfort him.

"It is not so bad to be left behind, when it means a journey in the railway train that will whisk you off so soon," he said. "We start to-morrow, and we shall reach Cairo in time to receive your mother and the little Amina. I should not wish to have them ride in the train with so many strangers to look at their veiled faces."

"Must I truly stay in Cairo with my uncle?" asked Hassan. "May I not go on to Mecca with you?"

"I would give up the pilgrimage and all that it means to kiss the sacred stone in the Kaaba, rather than take you with me now," said his father firmly.

The boy looked up at a pair of white pigeons that were cooing and fluttering on the roof of the house, but he made no reply, and his father continued:

"All my plans have been shaped these many

months. I have a good overseer to manage my estates. The Nile is shedding its blessings and the crops are all growing well. Shall I not then go to Mecca and give thanks to Allah for his many gifts?

“And you, my son, will find happiness in your uncle’s house. He will show you all the wonders of Cairo, and the three months of my absence will seem but a few days.”

Hassan bent his head and walked slowly across the rose gardens to the cotton fields where the men were picking the cotton. It was not until nightfall that he returned to the house, and even then he crept quietly to bed.

But the boy has never been born who could be unhappy on his first journey to Cairo, the wonderful capital of Egypt.

The city stands on the Nile at the point where the river branches into a broad delta. Because this delta is shaped like a fan, and because Cairo is such a beautiful city, the Egyptians call it “the diamond set in the handle of the fan.”

There were several Arabs on the train that carried Ibrahim Ali and his son into the city. As they rose to leave the train, Hassan heard one of the men say, “Cairo is the ‘Mother of the World.’”

Then the boy was in the city itself, clinging to



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A STREET IN CAIRO

From the circular platform of the minaret the muezzin calls the people to prayer. *Page 27*

his father's hand and looking wonderingly at the throngs of people who hemmed them about. There were men from every country of the globe, it seemed; there were horses and donkeys and camels; there were automobiles and electric trams, and carriages of all kinds and descriptions.

Ibrahim Ali stood still for a moment outside the station, and Hassan listened in amazement to the confused din of voices, — railway porters, hotel servants, carriage drivers, and donkey-boys, all shouting at the top of their lungs.

A barefooted, chocolate-colored boy screamed in Ibrahim Ali's ear, "Give me your bag!" and would have taken it, too; but the man brushed him aside and beckoned to a driver, who took charge of them and was soon whirling them through the crowded streets toward Yusuf Ali's house.

Hassan looked out of the window at the people in the streets, — English soldiers in uniforms of scarlet and gold, Bedouins in flowing white robes, American tourists with broad-brimmed hats and big umbrellas to shade them from the sun, peddlers and ragged beggars, veiled women, and street musicians.

"Why is Cairo called the 'Mother of the World?' " he asked. "Is it because all the world comes here to live, or is it because the city is so old that all the other cities are like her children?"

“ Egypt is old,” his father replied; “ so old that men can trace her history for six thousand years, and can tell stories of the kings who ruled the land four thousand years before the birth of the great Mohammed; but Cairo is not so old. There are many cities in the world much older.

“ The Egyptians love their city, and it is their way to speak extravagantly of anything they love. That is why we call Cairo our ‘ Jewel,’ our ‘ Mother of the World.’ ”

“ And is it always like this? ” questioned the boy. “ Are there always such crowds of people in the streets, such long lines of beautiful houses, such flags and streamers everywhere? ”

“ There are always the houses and the people,” his father answered; “ but the flags will disappear after the procession of pilgrims sets out for Mecca. We shall see the Mahmal taken from the citadel to-morrow, and on the next day I myself shall leave Cairo for the East.”

A mist blurred Hassan’s eyes, and he saw only dimly that they had stopped in a narrow, crooked street, before a door which was tightly closed as if to shut out the noise and confusion of the city.

Ibrahim Ali knocked upon the door, and presently it was opened by a porter who led them through a narrow corridor to the courtyard of Yusuf Ali’s house.

As they passed in, Hassan noticed that the door was painted green with tracings of red. An Arabic inscription in the center called down the blessing of Allah upon the inmates of the house.

In his excitement Hassan forgot to set his left foot first upon the threshold of the door and recite a prayer to ward off evil spirits; and now, not all the letters in the Arabic alphabet could avert the bad luck that was sure to follow him in his new home.

CHAPTER VI

MA'AS SALAMA

THE pilgrims always start for Mecca in the month of Shawwal, the month which follows Ramadan in the Mohammedan year. Sometimes it is High Nile when the pilgrimage begins; sometimes it is Low Nile, for the Mohammedan year is not at all like the Christian year.

The Mohammedans count their months by the moon because Mohammed, their Prophet, counted them in that way. The month begins on the day when the new moon is first seen, and when twelve moons have waxed and waned the Mohammedan year is ended.

At the beginning of the year everyone watches for the first glimpse of the new moon. When it is seen the news is telegraphed to Cairo, and there is a celebration in honor of the new year.

Each year begins about eleven days earlier than the year before. This makes the months come earlier and earlier in the seasons, so Shawwal sometimes comes at High Nile and sometimes at Low Nile, and in thirty-three years the Mohammedans gain one whole year.

All the people of Egypt reckon time by the Coptic year, which is like the Christian year except that it begins on the tenth of September; but the Mohammedans live also by their lunar year, especially in their religious feasts and fasts.

All this, and much more about the Moslem faith, Ibrahim Ali taught his son when they were at home in the Fayoum; but when the mother and little sister arrived in Cairo, and all the talk was about the pilgrimage, Hassan began to ask questions as if he had never heard of it before.

"Uncle Yusuf told us that he left Cairo at Low Nile," he said. "Why are you going at High Nile, and what shall you do in Mecca?"

His mother took him into a far corner of one of the beautiful rooms of his uncle's house to explain it all in one last loving talk. But although she told him as plainly as she could about the mysterious way the moon has of beginning as a crescent, and growing full and round as it grows older, only to start as a crescent again at the beginning of the new month, Hassan failed to see what it all had to do with the pilgrimage.

At last his father found a seat on the divan between the mother and son. "It is something for a man to explain," he said. "Women are not expected to know about such things."

He talked a long time and said a great deal

which sounded very learned; but in the end Hassan declared that it was no clearer than what his mother had told him.

Then they all three laughed together, and when little Amina cuddled down between them on the cushions, Ibrahim Ali stopped talking about the moon and the Moslem year, and told in simple words the story of the pilgrimage.

"In the city of Mecca, in Arabia, there is a great mosque," he said, "and in the center of this mosque there is a small square building called the Kaaba.

"Every year this Kaaba is covered all over on the outside with a beautiful black silk covering, around the center of which is embroidered in gold letters a text from the Koran. The pilgrims carry this covering with them from Cairo, and they bring back the old one to be cut up into pieces and sold to the faithful followers of the Prophet.

"In one corner of the Kaaba is a sacred stone which the pilgrims kiss. It is said to be a ruby which came down from Heaven; but it has been kissed by so many thousands and thousands of pilgrims that it is now quite black.

"Every Moslem prays with his face turned toward this Kaaba, and the pilgrims who have kissed the stone are blessed above all others."

Then he told about the great Mohammed, who

gave them the Koran to be their Bible, and who taught them how to live so that they might be blessed in Paradise.

This was something which Hassan could understand, and as he watched the procession forming the next day, he tried to think that he was glad to have his father and mother take the long journey to kiss the sacred stone.

The procession formed in the great square below the citadel, and Hassan found a place on the terrace where he could look down upon the crowds which were pouring in from every side.

Men, women and children thronged the streets; soldiers in gay uniforms marched by to the music of military bands; donkeys and camels wound their way in and out through the narrow lanes, and flags fluttered from every doorway, — beautiful red flags, each with a white crescent moon and a single star, the emblem of Mohammed.

The moving colors, the stir and excitement that grows when a great procession is forming, dazzled Hassan's eyes and made his heart beat fast under his new Turkish jacket.

Yusuf Ali stood beside his nephew, pointing out the soldiers in their red coats, the musicians with their long reed flutes and their big kettledrums, and the Khedive, who came riding into the square on a magnificent Arab horse; but it was Hassan's

loving eyes that caught the first glimpse of Ibrahim Ali among the crowds.

"See, there is my father, and there is the palanquin where my mother and sister are riding!" he cried, and he nearly fell from the terrace in trying to point them out.

"Yes, yes, I see them," his uncle said at last; "and there are all my brother's camels. He is taking a long camel-train to carry his provisions for the journey."

"The little red camel is my very own," Hassan explained eagerly. "He is loaded with the tent and bedding for my mother and sister."

Yusuf Ali had seen many a procession form in that same square, and he soon discovered the sacred Mahmal, a small palanquin, shaped like a pyramid and covered with velvets and beautiful embroideries, which was being borne on the back of a richly decorated camel.

"That Mahmal," he said, "represents the royal family. It goes to Mecca and back every year, and the camel that carries it will have no more work to do for the rest of its life."

"Who is that on the camel behind the Mahmal?" questioned the boy, pointing out an old man who was rolling his head from side to side as if he were crazy.

"That man is called the 'Sheik of the Camel,'"

replied Yusuf Ali. "He goes on the pilgrimage every year, and he will roll his head like that all the way to Mecca and back again. He is a very holy man. But look, the procession is ready to start."

The great crowd of people in the square surged back to right and left, making room for a troop of cavalry to lead the way toward the Bab-el-Nasr, the Gate of Victory, in the northeastern part of the city.

Behind the cavalry came a splendid regimental band, with beating drums and blaring trumpets, and beside them trotted a crowd of little Egyptian boys, jumping and laughing, and running pellmell in front of the horses.

Following the musicians came a troop of soldiers, and then came the different companies of pilgrims, each one headed by a small band of music. After them came long trains of camels, some with saddles of red, others with saddles of green. Flags, ostrich plumes and palm branches decorated their heads and necks. Bells tinkled from their blankets, and dancing red tassels hung from their trappings.

The camel-drivers and all the attendants wore bright turbans and sashes, and they carried banners of their masters' colors. Some beat upon drums and others played upon shrill fifes.

Such a noise Hassan had never heard in all his life, and his uncle could not help smiling at the

dazed look in the boy's eyes. "This is the greatest gala day in the whole year," he said. "The soldiers and camel-drivers must make all the brave show and gay music they can, for the harem windows are open to-day, and every maid and mother in Cairo is looking and listening."

"Is it to bid them good-bye that everybody stands in the street or looks from the windows?" asked Hassan.

"Yes," said Yusuf Ali thoughtlessly, "the journey is long and many of the pilgrims never live to come home again."

Hassan gazed into his uncle's face with startled eyes, then he looked down at his father, who was just taking his place in the procession.

"Suppose he should never come back," he whispered to himself. Then suddenly the brown eyes filled with tears, and in a shrill voice that throbbed with the grief of a bursting heart he called loudly the words of the Arabic good-bye, — "Ma'as Salama!"

In answer to his call Ibrahim Ali turned in his saddle, a veiled face peeped out from the curtains of the palanquin, and two pairs of loving eyes looked up at the boy on the terrace.

"Ma'as Salama!" their call came up to him, as their hands waved him farewell.

CHAPTER VII

AN UNLUCKY DAY

IT was Thursday and market day in Cairo. The pilgrims had already made more than a week's journey toward Mecca, and Ibrahim Ali was no doubt at that moment wishing that he might look upon the face of his son.

It was mid-afternoon and Hassan was taking his way home from school. From one narrow street into another he passed, looking neither to the right nor left, although there was plenty to attract his attention.

Old men were squatting on the ground beside boxes filled with vegetables; boys were walking about with great trays on their heads piled high with loaves of bread; there were boys with oranges and grapes, there were flower girls and water-carriers, there were jugglers and snake-charmers and street musicians.

Down the street came the quick patter-patter of the feet of white donkeys, their harnesses hung thick with little blue beads to guard against ill luck.

An Arab rode by on horseback, his heelless slip-

pers hanging from the toes of his bare feet. Behind him came a camel heavily loaded with old rags, and then a veiled woman on the back of a donkey. The woman had been to market, and she was attended by a black servant who walked beside her, his robe well filled with bundles.

A carriage drawn by a splendid pair of horses came down the street, with a runner in front to clear the way. The runner wore loose white trousers, a gold-braided jacket and a flowing crimson sash, and he carried a long wand in his hand to drive back the crowds.

"To the left, O lady!" he cried. "To the right, my uncle! Thy foot! Make way, make way!"

Hassan turned the corner and slipped into another street without even glancing at the horses or the runner. His closely shaven head was covered with a red fez, the dark blue tassel dangling against his cheek. He wore Turkish shoes of red leather, and a gay red jacket under his striped tunic. It was his aunt's pleasure to see that he looked as fine as possible every morning when he started out for school.

Six days had Hassan been to school in the great University of El-Azhar. Now, for the sixth time, he was trudging home; but his face looked pale and tired, and the old, happy laughter had died away from his eyes.

He reached his uncle's door and hurried past the black porter with the briefest of greetings. In the same room where he sat with his father and mother on that first night in Cairo he found his aunt. She was an older woman than his mother, — much older. She was lame, too, and very fat from sitting still too much. Her daughters had married and gone away to live. Her son was a student in a distant university, and the house was quiet and lonely.

Hassan went up to his aunt, and after greeting her with a wish that her evening be happy, he said abruptly: "I cannot go to the school again, my aunt. It is too hard. I am worn to a skeleton already. I cannot go any more."

His aunt looked up from her seat among the cushions. Her heart was a kind one, and she was troubled by the sight of the boy's sad face; but it was a long time since she had petted her own children and she had forgotten how to do it.

She should have gathered Hassan into her fat comfortable arms, and talked with him about the hundreds of other little boys who sit all day on the floor of their schoolrooms, studying and reciting their lessons.

Or she might have told him that El-Azhar, where his father wished to have him study, is the most famous university in the Mohammedan

world. It was founded more than seven hundred years ago, and students go there from all parts of Europe, Asia and Africa.

Thousands of men, — old men, middle-aged men and young men, — and hundreds of boys may be seen at one time, sitting on the floor around the columns in the court of the great mosque, the men listening to lectures, the boys studying the Koran.

This Koran has one hundred and fourteen chapters, and each chapter must be learned perfectly by heart. No wonder Hassan looked wan and tired!

His aunt looked at him until he had hard work to keep the tears out of his eyes. "Put on the clothes you used to wear at home," she said at last, "and then run out to play. You will feel better for a good run, and to-morrow we will talk about the school."

So Hassan took off the pretty new Turkish suit, and put on the old yellow slippers and the dear blue tunic that his mother made for him back in the Fayoum. But he did not like to play alone in the garden of his uncle's courtyard, so he slipped out into the street once more, where he looked just like any of the Egyptian boys who play in the streets or along the river-front.

He went through the Mouski, the long business street of Cairo, where all the tourists go to buy

trinkets and souvenirs. He passed the beautiful public gardens, where crowds of laughing, chattering foreigners were sitting at tiny tables under the palm trees, listening to the music of the band.

But Hassan was too sad to care for fun and music, and he went onward to the river, and then across the long bridge, until he reached the place where the steamers wait to take passengers up the Nile.

Here was something that reminded him of home. Great bales of cotton were piled up on the wharf beside boxes of peaches, pomegranates, and other delicious fruits, and he slipped out on the pier where he could get a whiff of their fragrance.

The government boat *Dal* was moored beside the wharf, and crowded near by were several smaller steamers and house-boats. It was just the place to attract a boy, and soon half a dozen dark-skinned lads had gathered to watch the loading of the *Dal*.

The water beckoned to them invitingly, and, one after another, they tossed off their cotton garments and dropped into the river for a frolic. In and out they splashed, calling to one another, pushing, diving, wrestling.

Hassan looked at them enviously. Many a time had he plunged into the Bahr Yusuf just as they dropped into this pleasant Nile water.

A young Englishman, who was sitting on the deck of a house-boat, saw the look on Hassan's face and said to his companion: "It will not be long before that little lad will be in the water with the others."

He had hardly spoken the words before Hassan lifted his arms and slipped out of his tunic. In a moment more he was ready for his plunge. They watched him from the house-boat, although he was no different from the others. They were all chocolate-colored, lithe-limbed little rascals, who were as much at home as fishes in the water.

But the other boys knew that Hassan was a stranger, and it was not long before they were ready to play a trick on him. There was a whisper, then a sign from the leader, and one of the boys swam quickly toward the pier while the others surrounded Hassan, thrashing the water into a white foam with their hands and splashing him with the spray.

"Five against one are too many," said the Englishman in the dahabeah.

But Hassan trod water valiantly and splashed the spray back again until he found that he could not drive the boys away. Then, suddenly, he disappeared under the water, and when he came up a few yards down the stream the boys had climbed up on the pier and were getting into their clothes.

Hassan also swam to the pier and looked for his own clothes; but they were gone. There was no trace anywhere of his old blue tunic, his red fez, or his yellow shoes.

When he demanded them of the boys they looked at him carelessly at first, then with well-pretended anger that he should accuse them of the theft. In the end they ran away, leaving him alone on the wharf.

Then Hassan's real spirit showed itself. There were neither tears nor anger in the dark eyes, as he curled himself up beside a bale of cotton to plan what he could do in the streets of Cairo without any clothes.

On the deck of the dahabeah the two Englishmen watched the boy with interest. "He looks like some one I have seen before," said one man to the other. "I should like to paint his picture."

"No doubt he would be glad to have you if you would offer him a piaster," answered his friend.

The artist raised his voice. "Here, O boy without a tunic," he called.

Hassan turned his eyes toward the boat. "Come with me and I will fit you out with a new suit of clothes," he heard the white man say in Arabic.

Hassan looked up the river where the *Dal* was already steaming along toward Assuan. That way lay also the Fayoum and home!

Then he looked back to the deck of the dahabeah where the sailors were setting the great sail to catch the wind. Soon the boat would follow the *Dal* up the river.

In a moment he slipped into the water and swam to the side of the house-boat. As he clambered on deck and shook the water out of his eyes he said, quite calmly: "Effendi, I will go with you gladly."

But the artist had remembered by this time that he had no right to take the boy away on a long trip up the Nile without asking some one's permission.

"Where is your father?" he questioned.

"Effendi," Hassan answered, "my father and my mother have gone on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and my home is far away."

He would have told them more, — about his aunt and his uncle, and the long days in the university where he must sit on the floor and learn the chapters of the Koran; but before he could speak again something struck him a heavy blow on the head.

It was the long yardarm of another dahabeah which was just swinging around into the channel, and as the heavy beam swept across the bow, it felled Hassan to the deck. There he lay, stunned and unconscious.

CHAPTER VIII

HASSAN IS LOST

WHEN nightfall came and brought no Hassan back to his uncle's house, there was a great outcry.

Yusuf Ali went to the Egyptian police and the English officials, and search was made for the boy in every quarter of the city, — from Bulak with its docks and markets on the northwest, to the citadel with its mosques and palaces on the southeast. But to hunt for a missing child in Cairo is like hunting for a needle in a haystack, or for a lost camel in the desert.

In the older part of the city, where Yusuf Ali lived, there were hundreds of dark lanes and alleys and stairways leading to still darker courtyards and cellars, where one might get lost and not easily find the way out again.

There has been so much evil and wrong-doing in Egypt in past days that children of the better class are watched and guarded most carefully, by their mothers and nurses, from the time they are born until they are grown up. But since the English soldiers have been stationed in the country, there is no more disorder in Cairo than in any other city

in the world, and the children are now quite safe to come and go as they please.

It takes a long time, however, for people to get over their ignorance and superstition. The Egyptian women still tie charms around their children's necks to drive away evil spirits, and little boys are kept within the shelter of the harem until they are old enough to go to school.

Because Yusuf Ali was a very rich merchant, it was soon known throughout the length and breadth of the city that his nephew had disappeared. While the police and soldiers were looking in all the streets and squares and public gardens, the servants were spreading the tidings through the courtyards and kitchens.

The sakkas, who carry on their shoulders jars of water which they sell in the streets, heard about the lost boy, and when they went back to the Nile for more water they put their heads together and talked it all over. They said that some evil spirit had enticed the boy away, and they told each other dreadful stories of genii who had snatched babies from their mothers' arms, and carried boys down with them into dark caves in the earth.

The servants, too, were sure it was the work of the jinn, and they said from the first that no one would ever see Hassan again.

All the next day Yusuf Ali walked up and down



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ON THE BANK OF THE NILE

Notice the water-carriers, the lateen-sail felucca, and the dahabeah near the opposite bank. *Page 46*

the streets, searching the tiny shops of the bazaars. It was a weary search. Everywhere there were sights to remind him of the lost boy, but no sight of the boy himself.

He wandered into the bazaar of the shoemakers, and there lay great piles of the pretty red shoes which the Arabs like to wear. Hassan had left his shoes in the harem at home.

A boy came down the street with a tray of sweetmeats, the very kind that Hassan liked to nibble on his way to school.

In the tailors' stalls there were little red jackets like the one he had bought for Hassan; and in all the other stalls there was something that Hassan would like to see, or something that he would like to buy for Hassan.

Hardly had he left the bazaars when he heard the murmur of children's voices, and there was a public fountain with its school of little boys in a room overhead.

It would be hard to tell what connection there is between a public fountain and a little school for boys; but everywhere in the streets of Cairo if you find one you will surely find the other.

The fountains project from the walls of the houses like big bay windows. They are gaily painted and decorated with colored marble, and each one contains a tank of fresh Nile water. This

tank is filled many times a day by a water-carrier, who brings the water up from the river in a bag made of pigskin or sheepskin.

In the tiny room over the fountain the pupils sit cross-legged on the floor in front of their master, chanting the chapters of the Koran or working out sums on little tin slates.

Yusuf Ali climbed the steep stairs and looked in at the open door. His heart ached at the sight. How he wished that he might see Hassan there, among the children on the floor, and hear the lad's voice with the others.

They were all studying industriously. Each boy held in his hand a wooden tablet on which the lesson was written in strange Arabic letters, and he swayed back and forth, back and forth, as he repeated the words over and over in a curious singsong chant.

The master shook his head when Yusuf Ali asked about his nephew. No one had heard tidings of the lost boy, he said.

So down again to the street went the merchant to take up the weary search once more. In and out he passed, through the winding chain of streets, with their endless procession of horses, camels and donkeys, men, women and children.

A story-teller held the attention of a group of boys, but Hassan was not among them. There

were crowds around the jugglers, the snake-charmers, and the street musicians; but not one of them all had seen the missing boy.

So on and on he walked, and still on, until night-fall sent him home at last.

And there at his own door stood a water-boy, holding in his hand Hassan's blue tunic and the little yellow shoes. He had found them, he said, on the bank of the river beyond the bridge; but there was no sign anywhere of the lad who had slipped them off for a swim in the muddy water.

Yusuf Ali took the little bundle of clothing and went up the stairs to the waiting, sorrowing aunt. "Hassan is drowned," he said. "We shall never look upon his face again."

But at that very moment a boat was skimming up the Nile before a steady, rollicking wind that filled the great white sail; and under an awning on the deck sat the missing boy, enjoying a life of sunshine and freedom, his books and study all forgotten.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE NILE

At the time Hassan was trampled on by the camel he was so badly hurt that he had to lie still in bed for many days. When the yardarm of the dahabeah struck his head he was not so badly hurt, but the blow drove away the memory of all that had happened in the twelve years of his life.

The two Englishmen carried him into the cabin and laid him on a couch as gently as his own father would have done, and it was not very long before he opened his eyes.

He looked up into the faces that were bending over him, with a dazed look, and when the men asked his name he shook his head. "I do not know," he said.

They asked other questions, — about his home, his people, and what he was doing in Cairo; but always he shook his head and answered: "I do not know."

At last one of the men reminded him that his father and mother had gone to Mecca, but Hassan seemed not to care. He had forgotten that he ever had a father and mother.

Then the two men left him lying in the cabin while they went on deck to consider what to do with him.

"He is probably one of the beggar children of Cairo. It will be a blessing to take him up the river and give him something to eat," said one, who was the guest of the other. "You are such a generous fellow, George," he added, "that one more mouth to feed will not trouble you at all."

George, or Girghis Effendi as the sailors called him, laughed good-naturedly. "These Egyptians have taught me to be generous, old fellow," he said. "Wherever there is a Mohammedan, there seems to be something for him to share with a stranger.

"We'll take this boy along with us, as you suggest, and when he remembers where his home is, one of the sailors shall land and take him back. But I doubt if he was ever a beggar. He is too plump and good-looking for that."

So the boat, which had already left its moorings, was allowed to continue on its course. It would be a shame, the captain said, not to take advantage of the good breeze, although the boat was a steam dahabeah and not dependent upon the wind.

When Hassan finally slipped off the couch and found his way on deck, he appeared perfectly well, and not at all the kind of boy to lose his memory.

He ate his supper and walked about, and he seemed to know how to put on the clothes they had found for him; but he remembered not a word about his home in the Fayoum, his visit to Cairo, or the boys who had stolen his tunic.

"This is the strangest case I ever saw," said Girghis Effendi, after he had questioned the boy again to no purpose.

The sailors, half a dozen dark-skinned Nubians, gathered about the lad to see what they could do with him.

"This river," asked one of them, "this river that makes the crops grow and keeps us alive, — what is its name?"

"And these boats," asked another, — pointing to steamers filled with white-robed passengers, feluccas loaded so heavily that they looked like great moving haystacks, and lateen-sailed dahabeahs like their own, — "these boats, where are they going?"

But Hassan always shook his head. "I do not know," he repeated over and over.

"He is bewitched," the sailors said at last, and they moved away from him, fearful that he might even bewitch them.

But the other Englishman, Major Bowker he was called, laughed at their foolish notion. "The boy had a blow on his head and it has taken away

his memory," he said. "Some day it will come back to him. In the meantime we will begin at the beginning and teach him everything he ought to know."

"I have a young nephew back in England who is just about your size," said Girghis Effendi, looking down into Hassan's face. "He would give all his old cricket bats to have your chance of sailing up the Nile."

"In the morning we will land near the ruins of ancient Memphis, and you shall see the statues of Rameses the Great, and the spot where the kings of Egypt had their capital almost five thousand years ago. That's far enough back for a beginning, isn't it?"

Major Bowker was lying idly in his steamer chair, watching the green banks of the river, with their tall palms and fields of waving grain.

"If you are going in for illustrated lectures," he interrupted, "you ought to begin with the river itself. The Nile was here, overflowing its banks every year, long before the kings built their ancient capital. The boy said he didn't even know the name of the river."

"That's all my nephew knows about Egypt, — the name of the Nile River," replied Girghis Effendi. "I wish he were here now to go into this boy's class. They would stand about even."

“What are you going to call the boy?” questioned the major. “It seems to me he deserves to have a name.”

“Perhaps he can remember his own name now,” suggested his host; “if he can’t, why not let him choose one for himself,” and he began repeating all the Arabic names he could think of that are common among the brown children of the Nile, — Achmed, Oman, Yusuf, Omar, Abraham; but at each one the boy shook his head.

“Try Abdallah,” put in Major Bowker. “That’s a good name.”

But Abdallah was not his name, of that the boy was certain; neither was it Mehemet nor Selim.

“Perhaps it is Hassan,” suggested the major.

But at that moment a splendid steamer came in sight on its way to Cairo, and the sailors on the dahabeah ran forward, calling out: “The Rameses the Great! There goes the Rameses the Great!”

“I believe everything in Egypt is named after Rameses the Great,” exclaimed Girghis Effendi.

Hassan looked up at him with a smile, and his face was very jolly and attractive in its brightness. “Call me Rameses the Great,” he said suddenly.

Both the Englishmen shouted with laughter, and the boy’s face grew serious at once. He could not understand why they laughed, but it seemed as if they were making fun of him.

Girghis Effendi, as tender-hearted as a woman, saw the look and put his arm around the boy, drawing him to his side.

"You shall be little Rameses the Great," he said, "if you will always smile as you were smiling then. Some day I will tell you about that other Rameses and give you a look at his face, although his soul was freed from his body nearly four thousand years ago."

"You will soon be teaching the lad to love you, instead of teaching him the geography of his country, as you should," exclaimed the major.

"There isn't much geography to teach him, here in Egypt," replied his friend. "If the Nile were to run dry there would be nothing left but the desert, and he can see for himself all there is to be said about the Nile."

It was Major Bowker's turn to shake his head. "If you neglect the boy's education, I shall take him in hand myself," he said firmly.

"Take the Nile, for instance," he added, looking over his glasses at Hassan; "it is a very remarkable river. After the two great branches, the Blue Nile and the White Nile, unite to form the main stream," (Major Bowker grew interested in his subject and paid no attention to his audience), "the river has only one tributary in its entire length. Instead, it has to pay tribute. As it crosses the desert it is

constantly being drawn off by means of canals. There are hundreds of these canals branching off to east and west to water the valley on either side."

"To say nothing of the wells and water-wheels, and the women and boys with jars on their heads who come down to the river every day for water," said Girghis Effendi.

"But come," he added, as he saw a tired look creeping into Hassan's eyes, "let the boy run around on the deck and find out how the sailors keep the boat off the sand-bars. He will learn more about the Nile in that way than by listening to your lecture."

So Hassan slipped away and left the two men to talk him over alone.

"You can be a father to him, and I'll try to fill his mother's place," Girghis Effendi proposed at last; and so well did each one take his part, that the boy was petted and indulged even more than his own parents had petted and indulged him.



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WOMEN AND BOYS WITH WATER - JARS

The date-palm, with its tall straight trunk and rough bark, is the most useful tree in Egypt. *Page 56*

CHAPTER X

RAMESES THE GREAT

“SLOWLY, Rameses Bey, slowly! Remember that ‘fair and softly go far’ in the Arab’s country.”

But Girghis Effendi had hardly shouted the words of warning when Hassan, or little Rameses Bey as the two Englishmen had begun to call him, was pitched headlong over his donkey’s ears into the shallow water beside the causeway, over which they were riding on their way to the ruins of Memphis.

The boy crawled out of the pool and climbed up the green slope, a grinning, bedraggled figure. The donkey, red-saddled with a jingling bridle, was waiting meekly enough for his rider, and Hassan clambered into his seat and gave the beast a resounding whack for tossing him into the water.

Then, while he waited for the others to come up, he wriggled out of his wet tunic and spread it across the donkey’s back to dry.

“That donkey will toss you into every pool of water we pass, if you try to make him trot so fast,” Girghis Effendi told the boy, as they rode along together. “He is probably used to carrying fat

old ladies over to see the ruins of Memphis and Sakkara, and he doesn't like boys who are in a hurry."

"I just wanted to see how fast he could go," Hassan explained, and then, after a moment, he asked: "What are we going to see to-day?"

"Ruins, child. Ruins of tombs and temples that have been buried in the sand for three thousand years and more."

"Who buried them?" questioned the boy.

"It was the desert," replied the man, "the desert with its shifting sand.

"Six thousand years ago people were living here beside the Nile, fishing and hunting and farming just as men do now. They were ruled by kings, rich and powerful men, who built magnificent temples, and great stone pyramids and tombs where their bodies might be buried when they died.

"Then the Egyptians were conquered by other nations, and there were terrible wars in the land, so that whole cities were destroyed and the temples and tombs were left in ruins.

"Hundreds of years they stood here, and the winds brought sand from the desert and covered them over, just as the birds covered the babes in the woods with leaves, until many of them were lost and all forgotten."

“Who found them and dug them out again?” Hassan asked.

“Let me tell him that,” interrupted Major Bowker. “You tell him everything. He will begin to think I don’t know any of this history.

“After a long time,” he said, turning to Hassan, “there were other great kings in Egypt who wanted to build cities, so they took the stones from the ancient ruins and used them in their own tombs and temples. Sometimes they found statues and mummies and beautiful jewels, and they helped themselves to anything they found.

“But still there were wonderful ruins hidden deep under the drifting sands. Men in other countries, France, England, and America, read about these ancient cities in very, very old books. They came here and hired laborers to dig away the sand, and they found treasures which are priceless, because they tell us how these ancient people lived.”

Girghis Effendi clapped his hands. “Bravo!” he cried, “after this I shall leave all the lecturing to you.”

There was no time for another lecture just then, however, for they were riding through a splendid grove of date-palms, and their guide came forward to explain that this was the site of Memphis, one of the capitals of ancient Egypt.

“Most of the stone used in the walls of the famous city has been carried down the river to Cairo to be used again in its palaces and mosques,” he said. “Of all the wonderful buildings that stood here centuries ago, not one stone remains upon another; but over here is the enormous statue of Rameses the Great,” and he led the way to the spot where the huge figure lies on its back under the trees.

“That is the king whose name you have chosen, little Rameses Bey,” said Girghis Effendi, putting his hand affectionately on the boy’s shoulder. “What do you think of him?”

“He must have been a great king if he was as big as that,” replied Hassan, with a laugh.

“He was no larger than any other man,” said Major Bowker; “but he liked to have people think of him as a great man. He called himself ‘Lord of the World,’ ‘Guardian of the Sun,’ and he once said: ‘If any one would know how great I am, let him try to excel my works.’”

“I can tell you something else about him,” broke in Girghis Effendi. “In those days the rulers of Egypt were called Pharaohs. This Rameses the Great was the very Pharaoh who oppressed the children of Israel, and it was his daughter who found little Moses among the bulrushes on the bank of the Nile.”

“ And it was to please one of his little sons,” added Major Bowker, “ that the famous story of ‘ Cinderella and the Glass Slipper ’ was first told. That was long, long ago, — ”

“ How long ago? ” queried Hassan.

“ I don’t know exactly, more than three thousand years, I should say,” replied the major. “ But although it was so long ago, Rameses the Great will never be forgotten, for he set up statues of himself all up and down the Nile, and he had his picture drawn and his name carved everywhere.”

“ Was he the greatest king of them all? ” asked the boy.

“ He was the greatest taskmaster of them all,” was the answer. “ He forced the poor slaves and fellaheen to build these monuments and temples for his glory, and when they died by thousands of starvation and disease, he sent for other thousands to work until they died.”

Little Rameses Bey looked up at the colossal figure of the great king. “ I do not want his name,” he said soberly. “ My own name is better, if I could only remember what it is.”

“ Some day it will all come back to you in a minute,” the major told him, and he jumped upon his donkey’s back, calling to the others to follow him across the desert to Sakkara.

CHAPTER XI

FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO

A LITTLE village nestled at the foot of the trees on the edge of the grove of date-palms. The houses were huddled close together, their gray mud walls cracked and broken, their window-holes staring blankly at the desert.

Old men and women sat in the sun by the dusty roadside, holding out their wrinkled hands for alms. Dogs came out to bark at the strangers, and a rabble of little children in bright-colored rags danced along beside them, begging for baksheesh.

Girghis Effendi put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a few coins which he tossed among the crowd, laughing heartily at the way they scrambled for them in the sand; but Major Bowker refused to give them a single fuddah.

"It teaches the children bad habits," he said, "and the men ought to be at work earning a living."

Girghis Effendi laughed again good-naturedly. He had laughed so much in his life that there were little wrinkles at the corners of his eyes, and Hassan often looked at them admiringly, hoping that he

should have some himself when he was a man. But the major insisted on driving the beggars away, and, after a little, the incessant chatter of their voices grew fainter and fainter in the distance.

The donkeys picked their way along through the fields, which were still watery from the flood of the Nile. On the higher ground, where the water had begun to recede, the new-springing wheat and clover made bright patches of green on the black mud.

Far away in the distant desert stood a great pyramid which seemed to rise up out of the barren sand.

“What is that?” questioned Hassan.

“That is the Step Pyramid,” the guide told him.

“It is the oldest stone monument in the history of the world. It was built for the tomb of King Zoser, who ruled over Egypt more than five thousand years ago.

“Around it is Sakkara, the great burying-ground for the people who lived in the ancient city of Memphis, and their mummies still lie in beautiful tombs under the sand.”

“There are mummies of cats and birds, too, in some of the tombs,” added Girghis Effendi, “for those old Egyptians worshipped animals and buried them with great ceremony when they died.”

"Why did they worship animals?" queried Hassan.

"I don't know," replied his friend. "It is hard to understand what they saw in some of their animals to worship. There was one village farther up the Nile where the people worshipped a fish. In the next village dogs were sacred, and the two villages got into a dreadful quarrel because the people of one killed the animals worshipped by the other."

"There was Crocodilopolis, too," added the major, "where the people worshipped crocodiles; and all over Egypt cows and bulls were sacred."

"Do you suppose their cows looked like ours?" said Hassan, and he pointed to a cow with very long horns that stood in the edge of the water, switching her tail to drive off the flies.

"Yes," replied Girghis Effendi; "they looked exactly like our cows."

"But how do you know, if it was so many thousand years ago?"

"There are pictures on the walls of the tombs that show just how everything looked in those days," the artist explained. "Here we are now at the entrance to the great tomb where the sacred bulls were buried, and you can see all these things for yourself."

Little Rameses Bey slipped off his donkey's

back, gathered up his long white tunic with one hand, and in the other took the lighted candle which the guide offered him.

He followed his two friends through the long dark corridors, deep down into the earth, where the flickering lights cast weird shadows on the walls, and hundreds of bats circled round their heads like ghosts.

He climbed the ladder and looked down into the great room where once had lain the mummy of a sacred bull; but when he came out again into the light he looked up into the artist's face with wondering eyes.

"Effendi," he said, "I do not understand it now. Why did the people worship animals? "

The man put his hand affectionately on the boy's head. "You must remember," he said, "that all this happened two or three thousand years before the birth of Christ, or of your prophet Mohammed, and the people believed in gods and goddesses. They thought that one of their gods took the form of a bull, so they built a palace for him near their temple. They fed the sacred beast on wheaten broth with milk and honey-cakes; he slept on a soft couch behind a beautiful curtain, and when he died he was buried in one of these tombs."

"Come," interrupted Major Bowker, "it is time

to eat our lunch. Let us try to find a bit of shade where we can rest our eyes from the glare of the sun on the sand."

"But there is the tomb of King Thyi—" began Girghis Effendi.

"It must wait," declared the major. "It has waited five thousand years for me to come and take a look at it; it can surely wait while I eat my lunch."

Little Rameses Bey was also glad of a chance to rest. The sun blinded his eyes, and sometimes his head felt tired and heavy. There were so many things he wanted to remember, but when he tried to think about them it made a red light dance before his eyes.

He followed his two friends obediently all the afternoon. He clambered down into the tombs, he looked at the statues and paintings which they pointed out, he listened to their stories and answered their questions; but all the time he was saying to himself: "What is my name, and how shall I find my father and mother?"

Toward night the little party came again to the village beside the Nile, where their boat was moored. The sun was just dropping out of sight beyond the rim of the desert, and the whole world was flooded with a rosy light.

As the string of donkeys pattered through the

village street the muezzin came out on the terrace beside the mosque. "Come to prayer!" he called. "Come to prayer! Allah is great. Come to prayer!"

Like a flash Rameses Bey slipped out of his saddle, turned his face toward the east and knelt upon the ground, murmuring softly the words of the sunset prayer. When he rose again from his knees, his face was shining with happiness.

"My father taught me to say the Moslem prayers," he said excitedly; "and there was a little girl — beside a fountain —"

Then swiftly the picture was gone from his mind, and, try as hard as he would, he could remember no more.

CHAPTER XII

PICTURE WRITING

GIRGHIS EFFENDI was an artist, and he liked the sight of a great white sail far better than the smoke of an engine. When he came on deck the next morning and found a stiff breeze rattling the awning and doing its best to shake out the sail, he looked toward the date-palms of ancient Memphis and shook his head.

"This breeze is better than tombs and hieroglyphics," he said. "We have seen enough of Sakkara for the present. Let us move along up the river and take a look at some of the 'Benies.'"

"Beni" is the Arabic word for children, and there are ever so many towns and villages scattered along the banks of the Nile which have Beni for their first name, as Beni-Samet, Beni-Ebeid, Beni-Ali, Beni-Hassan, because they were settled by the children of Samet or Ebeid or Ali or Hassan.

So up went the sail and off flew the boat before a rollicking wind, while the three friends ate their breakfast under the awning on the deck.

The hardest part of the boy's new life was this curious manner of eating.

At home he always sat on the floor, or on a low divan, and helped himself from the round tray which was placed on a low stool in front of him. There were no awkward knives and forks to trouble him. Every one had a piece of bread for a plate, and used a long-handled spoon to take the rice or vegetables from the bowl in the center of the tray. Meat was eaten daintily with the fingers, and bits of bread were dipped into the soup.

How could he ever learn to sit in a straight chair at a big round table and eat from a plate with a knife and fork? There was the butter to spread on the bread, and the milk to pour into the coffee, and, as for the oranges, — they were impossible! Surely these English people had strange ways.

While he was eating his breakfast there was no time to think of anything else; but when they rose from the table and Girghis Effendi stretched himself out in his steamer chair, the boy curled himself up on the deck beside his friend.

“You told the major,” he said, “that this wind is better than hieroglyphics. What are hieroglyphics?”

“They are pictures and signs to represent words,” replied the artist. “In ancient times the people did not have an alphabet like yours or mine, so they wrote with pictures. They carved these pictures on the stone walls and pillars of their

temples and tombs to tell the story of their lives.

“ When the ruins were discovered and the tombs were opened, there were all these hieroglyphics on the walls; but not a soul in the whole world could read them. Men studied and studied, and worked over them as if they were puzzles, as indeed they were; but not one word could they read.

“ At last, about one hundred years ago, some soldiers found a wonderful stone in Rosetta, near the mouth of the Nile. On one face of the stone were hieroglyphics; just below, were the same words carved in another language, and below that they were carved again in Greek.

“ There were plenty of men who could read Greek, so here was the key to unlock the mystery, just as if it had been made on purpose; and now all the hieroglyphics can be read, thanks to the Rosetta Stone.”

“ Is that how you know that the ancient Egyptians worshipped animals, — by reading hieroglyphics? ” questioned Hassan.

“ No,” replied Girghis Effendi, “ we know a great deal about the lives of the people by looking at pictures like those we saw yesterday in the tombs. Don’t you remember them?

“ There were men building houses and boats, hunters killing wild animals, farmers threshing

corn, and servants stuffing geese. Then there was one picture of some little chickens coming out of a hatching-stove, just as they come out of incubators now-a-days."

"Oh, yes, I remember them," answered the boy; "but they were funny-looking pictures, not half so good as yours."

Major Bowker gave a great shout of laughter. "There, my friend," he cried, clapping the artist on the back, "there's true appreciation for you. Get out your brushes and go to work. Why are you idling away your time when you might be making pictures for little Rameses Bey?"

Girghis Effendi looked down at the boy at his feet. "I would paint a picture of you this very day," he said, "if we could find some clothes to fit you; but that tunic screams all the time that it belongs to some one else."

Rameses Bey looked down at the loose folds of the long white tunic that covered his sturdy figure. "I had a blue tunic," he said, "and some yellow shoes —"

"Yes, and when you went in swimming the boys stole them," Major Bowker reminded him. "See if you can't remember who gave them to you, or how you happened to be down there by the river."

Hassan shook his head sadly. "No," he said, "I can't remember anything about it," and after

a minute he wandered away to the other side of the deck.

The artist sent for his brushes and paints and went to work on a picture of a group of black-robed women carrying water-jars on their heads, and Major Bowker stretched himself out in his chair and opened a book.

So the days drifted idly by, — first one, and then another, and another. They would have been lonely days for Hassan if he had not found pleasure in watching the pictures grow under the painter's skillful brush, and in listening to the two men as they talked of Egypt and of other lands where they had travelled together.

The sailors still looked upon the boy with distrust. They were Nubians, most of them, from the south of Egypt, and they believed in all sorts of witchcraft. They could not understand how it was that this boy knew nothing of his former life, and they were afraid of him. They looked at him with quick, sidelong glances, and they talked about him to one another; but they took good care not to come too near him.

At last Girghis Effendi saw that the boy was growing restless, and he tried to think of an excuse for sending him on shore for an hour or two.

"Achmet!" he called, clapping his hands, and in a moment the cook appeared on deck, rolling

his black eyes and grinning so that he showed two rows of white teeth.

"Achmet," said Girghis Effendi, "we need some fresh milk."

Achmet grinned again. What could the master be thinking of? There was still a good supply of condensed milk among his stores.

But the artist insisted that they must have some fresh milk, and he sent Rameses Bey on shore to get it.

"Don't come back until you have found a gallon of sweet milk," he charged the boy, putting ten piasters in a tiny purse which Hassan hung around his neck.

"Let me go with him," urged the dragoman. "He will never find any milk alone."

"Yes, he will," declared the major, "and it will do him good to try."

CHAPTER XIII

THE POTTER'S BOY

"ALLAH help us!" the sailor chanted over and over again, as he rowed Hassan ashore in a little flat-bottomed boat. "Allah help us!" he repeated, as he made the boat fast to a tumble-down, wooden pier, and he turned his face away lest the boy should cast upon him the spell of the Evil Eye.

But Hassan paid no attention to the sailor. He made his way quickly across the fields and up the steep bank toward the village on the edge of the desert.

This desert, which covers almost the whole of Egypt, is a part of the great desert of Sahara in northern Africa.

The Nile River, flowing through it from south to north, brings water and a rich mud from the mountains at its source, and makes a fertile valley like a green ribbon winding across the barren yellow sands.

Sometimes the green banks are only two or three feet wide, with a steep sandy bluff behind them; sometimes they spread out for eight or ten miles

and are covered with broad fields of maize and sugar-cane.

The desert is a vast wilderness. One can travel across it for hours without seeing trees or flowers, or beasts or birds, or so much as a little fly. But in the oases, and all up and down the Nile, dotted here and there in the green ribbon, are the towns and little mud villages of the poor fellaheen, the peasant folk of Egypt.

The village where Hassan went on shore to buy some milk was set high up on a sandy bluff, close to the edge of the river. As the boy climbed the steep bank he heard the creaking of a water-wheel, and he stopped for a moment to watch the water pour out of the little pitchers into the narrow canal.

Nearly every drop of water in Egypt is furnished by the Nile. There is almost no rain, there is no other river, and there are no brooks. All the water used in the farms and villages must be raised out of the river, and water-wheels and water-buckets work hour after hour, day after day, to moisten the parching soil.

The water-wheels, or sakiyehs as they are called, are turned by a donkey, a buffalo, or even a camel, which plods slowly round and round, turning a great wheel.

This wheel lies at the top of a well which is dug

in the bank beside the river, and it turns a smaller wheel on which hang earthen jars or pitchers. As the pitchers dip down into the well they are filled with water, and as they come up to the surface the water pours out into a shallow ditch.

Then again there are the water-buckets, or shadoofs, which are filled and emptied hundreds of times each day by a poor fellah who works from dawn to dark for a few fuddah. The man stands on the river-bank, dips his bucket, which is hung on the end of a long pole, into the water, raises it and pours the water into a trough. If the bank is steep, another man stands higher up and fills his bucket in the trough, pouring it out again into a shallow canal.

The creaking of the water-wheels and the mournful chant of the shadoof laborers is the endless song of the Nile.

And so it has been for hundreds, yes, for thousands of years, — the great barren desert, the fertile green valley, and the Nile water to moisten the earth and give the people their food.

While Hassan stood watching the boy who was driving the buffalo round and round in an endless circle, a man came down the path carrying a load of water-jars on his back. These jars are called kullahs. A great quantity of them were already stacked along the river-bank to be sent down to

Cairo and Alexandria, for in this village there were deep beds of clay from which the jars are made.

"That is just what I need for carrying the milk," Hassan said to himself, and he hurried off to the village to buy one.

In the courtyard of a house on the outskirts of the town he caught sight of a potter at his wheel.

It was the house of the head man of the village, and the sheik himself was seated on a bench in the gateway, which was deep and wide and sheltered from the heat of the sun. When he saw that the boy was watching the potter, he motioned to him to pass through the gate.

The potter sat on the ground in front of a rude, old-fashioned machine with a foot-treadle. This machine was set into a hole in the ground. As the man worked the treadle with his foot, a wooden disk whirled round and round before him, upon which he deftly shaped the clay with his hands.

A boy about Hassan's age, whom the potter called Oman, stood beside the man and kept him supplied with clay. Whenever a jar was finished, he took it away and put a piece of wet clay on the wheel. The man had already made a dozen jars which were drying in the sun.

"I would like to buy a kullah," Hassan said, when he saw the boy take a jar from the potter's wheel.

"Come with me," replied Oman. "I am going now to take these kullahs to the kiln to be baked. There you will find plenty to your liking."

Hassan picked up one of the wet jars and followed Oman into another courtyard, where a man stood in front of a kiln taking kullahs out of the great oven. On the farther side of the yard, stacked up against the wall, was a great pile of them, waiting for their journey to the river.

"Look," said Oman, "I will sell you one of these good jars. My master, the sheik, will let you have one very cheap." Then he looked at Hassan with his shrewd, black eyes, as if to guess how much the lad would pay. "Eight piasters," he said at last; "you may have one for only eight piasters. It is very cheap."

But Hassan was his father's own son at a trade. He gave a short quick laugh and turned away. "No," he said, "I do not care to buy a kullah to-day; or, it may be I shall find one somewhere else."

The potter's boy selected a jar from the pile and set it on one side. "That is for you," he said; "and as you will carry it away yourself, you may have it for six piasters."

Then he went back for more kullahs for the kiln, and Hassan followed him to say that he would give two piasters and no more.

So back and forth from the kiln to the potter's wheel went the two boys, dickering over the price of the kullah. At last Oman took a decided stand. "You may have it for three piasters," he said firmly; "but not another fuddah can I take off. If I do, my master will beat me."

He said this looking Hassan straight in the eye, although he knew perfectly well that the kullah was worth only two piasters, and that he would put the third coin in his own pocket.

But Hassan was satisfied with the price. He took three coins from his purse and gave them to the boy. Then he tucked the jar under his arm and started off across the courtyard.

The sheik, who was still sitting in the gateway, remembered that the lad had passed in empty-handed.

"Where did you get one of my kullahs?" he asked; but before Hassan could reply Oman hurried forward.

"I sold it to him for your profit, my master," he said, holding out the money, and neither Hassan nor the sheik guessed that one piaster was hidden in his other hand.

"Where are you going with your water-jar?" asked the man, as he took the coins.

"I am going to buy fresh milk for my friend."

"And who is your friend?"

"He is an artist," the boy replied. "He is on his way up the river in a dahabeah, and he paints pictures. One week already have we been on the water, and now he is hungry for fresh milk."

When Hassan spoke of the dahabeah the sheik guessed easily that the artist was a foreigner and very rich, for only a rich man can afford to hire one of these Nile boats.

"Oman," he called, "take this jar and fill it with milk." Then, turning to Hassan, he added, "Return to your friend and tell him that the sheik of Beni-Hassan sends him both the jar and its contents as a gift, and begs that he will share his bread and salt at the hour of sunset."

As he spoke he held out the two piasters and Hassan slipped them into the purse without missing the third coin, for the sheik's words had stirred a new thought in his head.

As he went back to the river and was rowed again to the boat, the name of the village said itself over and over in his mind, — "Beni-Hassan, Beni-Hassan," until the boy said to himself at last: "It is the name of some one I have known."



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THE COLOSSI OF MEMNON

"Giants of stone that have faced the East to greet the rising sun for more than three thousand years." *Page 81*

CHAPTER XIV

HASSAN'S NEW TUNIC

“Two things I wish to know and then I shall feel peace in my heart, O Girghis Effendi.”

Hassan knelt beside the artist as he spoke, and offered him a pipe and some tobacco for his after-dinner smoke. As he took the pipe, Girghis Effendi looked down into the boy's face with a tender smile and answered: “Now, what can those two things be, I wonder?”

Hassan raised his eyes to the cloudless sky and said nothing for a few moments, while the Englishman puffed silently at his pipe.

The two friends, man and boy, were sitting alone among the ruins of the great temple at Karnak. It was two days since Hassan's visit to the village sheik, and the boat had been making quick time up the river.

Sunrise had found them within sight of the statues of Memnon, two colossal figures that have faced the east to greet the rising sun for more than three thousand years. There they sit, those giants of stone, their immense hands resting meekly on their knees, their sightless eyes gazing across the

desert toward the dawning of another day. Earthquakes and floods have devastated the valley, great armies have swept over the land, conquering heroes have marched by to victory, and still they wait upon their thrones, erect and silent.

After the glory of Memphis died away, Thebes became the capital of ancient Egypt, — Golden Thebes, with its splendid palaces and temples, its statues and obelisks, its gems and precious stones.

Hundred-gated Thebes it was, a city of enormous wealth, where for two thousand years the kings of Egypt spent vast sums in building and beautifying the temples. But in the past two thousand years the glory of the city has faded away, and on the site of ancient Thebes stand the modern towns of Luxor and Karnak, guarding the ruins of the famous city.

In the valley of the Nile there is little rain, no frost, no ice nor snow. The sky is blue and cloudless, and there is nothing but the ruthless hand of an enemy to destroy the temples and tear down the walls. Row upon row of enormous columns still mark the halls and courts of the ancient buildings, and many of the pictures and hieroglyphics are as plain now as on the day they first were carved.

The ruins of Thebes are seldom deserted. Tourists are brought there every day, by boat, by train, or on the backs of donkeys; and there is a constant



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AMONG THE RUINS OF THEBES

On the enormous columns were carved pictures and hieroglyphics. *Page 82*

procession of sight-seers passing through the halls and courts of the temples, and studying the drawings on the columns.

While Hassan and his friend were eating their lunch in the shade of one of these great columns, a clumsy water-buffalo, stumbling about over the stones and rubbish, had stopped to stare at them; but now everything was still, except for the mournful cry of a hoopoo, and the cooing of pigeons that wheeled above their heads.

"What can your two wishes be?" repeated Girghis Effendi.

For answer the boy pulled the little bag of piasters from beneath his tunic. He poured the coins out into the palm of his hand and arranged them singly on the ground.

"Count them," he commanded, quite as if the artist were the servant and he the master.

Girghis Effendi counted them aloud in Arabic to please the boy, — "Wâhid, itnein, talâteh," and so on up to nine.

"Yes," he said, "there are nine piasters. And what about them?"

"You gave me ten," and Hassan looked earnestly into the man's face. "One of them is missing."

"What did you do with it?" and Girghis Effendi looked gravely back into Hassan's face.

"The potter's boy must have kept it, for now

that I wish to give it back to you, I have it not. The potter's boy was a thief," and Hassan nodded his head emphatically. Then he swept the money together and held it out in his hand.

The artist took the coins and slipped them into his pocket. "It all seems very plain to me," he said. "What is it you wish to know?"

"I would like to know what will become of that boy. It is not good to be a thief."

Girghis Effendi laughed. "I can tell you what will happen," he said. "In a mosque in Cairo two pillars stand close together, side by side; and it is said that only an honest man can pass between them. Some day your friend will try to squeeze through the narrow space, and then all the world will know he is a thief."

"I wish I could see those two pillars," said Hassan eagerly. "I would make myself very small to go between them." And he jumped to his feet and drew in his breath to show how small he could really be.

The artist looked at him keenly. "Those pillars are in the Mosque of Amru," he said. "Did you never go there with your father?" But in a moment he was sorry he had asked the question, for the old sad look crept into the boy's face, and it was plain that he still had no memory of his life in Cairo.

"Tell me, little Rameses Bey," he added quickly, "what was your second wish?"

"That was my second wish," replied the boy; "to know my other life and what it was like."

"Patience, lad, patience," said Girghis Effendi cheerfully. "It will all come back to you some day. The old Arab proverb tells us that Allah is with the patient if they know how to wait. There is nothing to hurry you. Are you not happy here with me?"

"Effendi, yes," Hassan answered.

"Some of the ancient Egyptians," went on the artist, "believed that every person was born with a double, a kind of guardian angel, which they called the Ka. When the Ka was freed from the body it could go flying about all over the world, but it must always come back again.

"You have a double, you see, and it has gone off on a journey by itself. Some day it will return and then you will know who you are."

Hassan laughed. "Perhaps I am a prince," he said, "and my double is in the Khedive's palace in Cairo."

"If your father and mother have gone to Mecca, perhaps your Ka has gone with them," the artist told him.

"Yes," cried Hassan eagerly, "I did go with my father. He was on the back of a camel, —" As

he spoke the vague memory of his ride down to the Nile flitted through his mind, but it slipped away just as he would have caught it.

Girghis Effendi nodded his head. "That's right," he said heartily. "You'll remember it all some day. Now let's think of something else. Here's a bundle for you to open."

Hassan untied the strings with eager fingers. "Ai hai!" he shouted, as he held up a red embroidered caftan. Out of the caftan fell another package, and when he unrolled it he shouted again, for there was a blue tunic. Inside the tunic was a turban, and inside the turban lay a pair of red slippers.

"Try them on," suggested the artist, when Hassan discovered the slippers; and in a moment the boy was capering about in them, holding up one foot and then the other to show the perfect fit.

"Where did you get them?" he asked, his eyes shining with delight.

"Oh, the shops of Luxor are filled with many pretty things," answered his friend. "Did you think they had nothing but scarabs for sale?"

The scarab is a black beetle that crawls out of the mud after the flood of the river. In olden times the Egyptians carved bits of bright-colored stone in the shape of these beetles and used them as talismans and charms.

They put these stone beetles in the tombs with the mummies, and when the tombs were opened many beautiful scarabs were found. Tourists in Egypt like to buy antique scarabs to wear for jewelry, but many of those which are offered for sale are only cheap imitations made by the dozen in England.

"I need no scarab charm," sang little Rameses Bey, hopping about in the courtyard of the ancient temple. Over and over he sang it, as the brown children of the Nile have a way of doing when they are happy. "I need no scarab charm. I have shoes and a tunic, a turban and caftan. I need no scarab to keep me from harm!"

So loud was his rejoicing that the old water-buffalo shook his horns and shambled off toward the river, and a pretty water-girl peeped into the court to see what the noise was all about. She wore silver bands around her ankles, silver bracelets on her wrists, and a string of gold coins about her forehead.

"She is just like all the rest of these Egyptian girls," murmured Girghis Effendi. "Rings on her fingers, bells on her toes; she shall have music wherever she goes!" But he painted a picture of the girl and the boy and sent it home to his nephew in England.

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT DAM

It was three weeks from the day the dahabeah left Cairo before it reached Assuan, more than five hundred miles away, for Girghis Effendi liked to sail slowly up the river, stopping here and there to paint a picture or to visit some of the famous ruins.

Assuan lies at the southern boundary of Egypt. The Nile flows across the country from Assuan to the Mediterranean Sea; but this is only a part of the great river, which is over four thousand miles long and comes down from the mountains of Abyssinia, across the Sudan and Nubia, to moisten the desert sands of Egypt.

One morning, as they were sailing quietly along under the shadow of a steep cliff, the creaking of a water-wheel attracted the artist's attention.

It occurred to him that little Rameses Bey, sitting astride the buffalo and driving it round and round, would make a good picture. He ordered the captain to stop the boat, and with the help of some of the sailors his sketching materials were carried to the top of the cliff.

The little fellah, who had been sitting on the back of the patient animal for many weary hours, was only too glad to jump down and let Hassan take his place, and Hassan was just as glad to have a ride.

Round and round went the buffalo, and round and round went the great wheel, bringing up the dripping jars of water from the well. Some of them were cracked or broken, and leaked so badly that by the time they reached the surface they were almost empty.

The rickety wheels creaked dismally, and the cogs rattled as they slipped in and out. Hassan clung tightly to the hungry-looking beast, and the artist worked swiftly and silently.

"It is a slow way of watering the fields," said Hassan, when at last Girghis Effendi declared that he had drawn everything but the squeak in the wheels.

"It is the way the fields have been watered for thousands of years," the artist answered. "In the days of Rameses the Great, and even before, the water-wheels were creaking and the shadoof laborers were singing all up and down the Nile."

As he spoke, the artist lifted Hassan off the back of the buffalo and gathered up his paints and brushes. Then he gave the little fellah a piaster and left him grinning with delight over his good

fortune, as he rode round and round again on his endless journey.

"I should think some one would find a better way of watering the fields," said Hassan, when they were on the deck of the dahabeah once more.

"All sorts of ways have been tried," replied Girghis Effendi; "but the old way seems to be the best. During the last century, however, the government has begun to irrigate the land on an enormous scale. Three great dams have been built at different places along the Nile, and the water is held back in reservoirs to be used during the summer when everything seems to be drying up."

"We saw one of the dams at Assiout, didn't we?" asked the boy.

"Yes, and there is one at Cairo, too; but the largest barrage of the three is at Assuan," Girghis Effendi answered. "It is one of the many good things which the English have done for Egypt."

"Tell me about it," begged Hassan, who was always ready for a story.

"Ask Major Bowker to tell you," replied the artist. "He knows more about it than I do, and besides, I must finish this picture before the light fails."

So Major Bowker closed his book and told little Rameses Bey the story of old Father Nile.

"Long ago," he said, "the people of Egypt be-

lieved in gods, and they thought that the yearly flood of their great life-giving river was caused by the tears of the goddess Isis weeping for Osiris; but now we know that it is the spring rains and the melting snows in the mountains of Abyssinia."

"The old explanation was much better," murmured the artist.

"In July," the major went on, "the water begins to pour down the river in a great freshet, and it floods the whole valley. In September the river is at its height, and all the canals are filled to overflowing.

"Then the water slowly recedes and the river grows lower and lower. In February the canals are dry, and sand-bars appear in the river-bed, and in June the whole country seems to have dried up. Then in July the freshet begins again, and so it has gone on for thousands of years."

"I have seen the river at its height," said Hassan. "There was a man who came running up to tell us, and there were boats and camels," — but he could remember nothing more.

"Father Nile has always ruled Egypt, no matter what king sat upon the throne," the major continued. "It has always been the great ambition of the kings to conquer the Nile, and even in the last century they kept the poor fellaheen hard at work to hold back the floods."

“What did they do?” questioned Hassan, when Major Bowker stopped as if his story were ended.

“Sixty days at High Nile the fellaheen had to strengthen the dykes and embankments. Sixty days at Low Nile they had to dig the mud out of the canals and ditches, and all this work had to be done for nothing.”

“For nothing!” repeated Hassan. “Didn’t they get any pay at all?”

“No,” replied the major, “they had to work one hundred and twenty days in every year without a single fuddah of pay; and besides that, they often had to go a long way from home and supply their own food and tools.

“It was called forced labor, and it was a cruel, cruel system. That was the way all these wonderful temples and tombs and pyramids were built, and the way the Suez Canal was dug; but the English have changed all that now. There is no more forced labor in Egypt. There are no more unjust taxes, and the great dam at Assuan has at last conquered the Nile.”

“I don’t understand about the dam,” said Hassan. “Do you suppose we shall see it when we are in Assuan?”

“Oh, yes,” the major told him. “It is the biggest thing in Assuan, and about the biggest thing in Egypt. It is a mile and a quarter long,

and is built of blocks of rose-granite taken from the very same quarries that the stones were taken from to build the walls and temples of ancient Thebes.

“When the Nile begins to rise, the water is red with mud, which is brought down from the mountains three thousand miles away. Then the sluice-gates of the dam stand wide open to allow this flood to cover the valley and deposit the mud on the sand.

“In December, when the water is clear and green, the gates are closed, and the flood is held back so that it forms a great lake. Then at Low Nile the gates are slowly opened and the water flows down to keep the soil moist and fertile. In this way crops can be grown all the year round, and there are no more years of famine in Egypt.”

Hassan looked into the faces of his two friends. “Did the English do all that for my country?” he asked.

“All that and much more,” replied Girghis Effendi. “And now I’ll tell you what two Englishmen are going to do for you. They are going to take you to Assuan to see the great dam, and the cataracts in the river, and the camel caravans that come from Central Africa with loads of ivory and skins, — ”

“And we’ll see Elephantine Island,” added Major Bowker. “Don’t forget to mention that.”

“ Will we see any elephants? ” questioned Hassan eagerly.

“ No,” replied the artist, “ there are no elephants in Egypt now; but we will see the island where they used to live, and then — ”

“ And then — ” repeated Hassan.

“ And then we’ll go back to Karnak and hire some camels, and we’ll ride off across the desert to the Oasis of Kharga. After this long ride on the ship of the river, it will be good fun to travel on the ship of the desert.”

CHAPTER XVI

A MIRAGE IN THE DESERT

It was a mirage in the desert that brought back Hassan's memory, — a vision of water with date-palms growing beside it, and pigeon towers reflected in its clear, cool depths.

Four days' camel-march from Karnak lies the Oasis of Kharga, and it was this oasis which Girghis Effendi wished to visit. So they turned back from Assuan, where they stayed only two or three days, and sailed swiftly down the river with the current to Karnak. There they left the dahabeah and hired a small train of camels for the journey across the desert.

The Arabs have a saying that "the camel is the greatest of all the blessings of Allah;" and so it must seem to the desert-dwellers.

The camel is their horse, their cow, and their freight train. It gives them milk and meat. The hair is twisted into ropes and woven into tent-coverings and soft warm shawls. The hide is cured for leather, and even the bones are used for various tools and utensils.

Everything about the camel shows how he is

fitted for a life in the desert. His long neck enables him to reach out for the thorny desert shrubs, and his mouth is hard so that he can eat them. His nostrils are large, and he can take deep breaths of the thin desert air; but in a windstorm they can be closed to keep out the sand.

The camel's eyes are protected from the noon-day glare by overhanging lids, and the cushions on his feet make easy travelling in the sand. His arched back enables him to carry heavy loads, and the water reservoirs in his stomach make it possible for him to travel four or five days without fresh water.

There were nine camels in the caravan which set out for the Oasis of Kharga. One carried tents and bedding, two carried food, water, and cooking utensils. One was loaded with beans and straw, and another with bundles of dry twigs for the fire.

Then there were four camels for the travellers and their guide; and with the camel-drivers and their boys, the cook, and two or three servants, all of whom trotted along on foot, they made a long procession as they rode out of the village into the desert.

Hassan watched the preparations for the journey with great interest, and as he climbed into his saddle something stirred again in his memory.

"I have ridden like this before," he said to him-

self, as he swayed gently back and forth with the motion of the beast. It was a young camel, and it was red-brown like the one his father had bought of the Bedouin trader; but the memory of the little red camel in the Fayoum flitted away as he would have caught it.

It was the first time that the two Englishmen had ever ridden on the back of a camel, and they looked at Hassan in amazement. He was quite at home in the saddle, and seemed to ride easily and comfortably.

"I believe that the boy is the son of a rich merchant," Major Bowker told his friend. "He rides as if he were accustomed to it."

A gray mist hung over the valley in the early morning, but as the sun rose the fog burned away and revealed a clear sky, — blue and cloudless.

In less than half an hour the caravan had left the fertile valley and was out in the desert, — out in a new world, a world of sand.

Hour after hour they rode slowly along, while the sun rose higher and higher, the still air grew hotter and hotter. Mile after mile the camels plodded on through the barren waste of sand.

Hassan's eyes began to ache with the glare of the sun and he closed them wearily. When he opened them again, there was the same vast expanse of sand. Sometimes it was piled up in low ridges, or

in little round hills. Sometimes there were rocky slopes or steep gullies.

Here the sand had been blown up into long waves, there it was marked with ripples like those in a river or in drifting snow; but always there was sand, — nothing but sand, — burning, blinding, glaring sand!

At noon the camels were halted and their riders ate a light lunch, still sitting in their saddles; and then on and on they went through the vast wilderness.

The Bedouins sang as they trudged along, a low, moaning song, repeating over and over the name of "Allah, Allah, Allah!"

The two Englishmen spoke now and then of their discomfort; they faced one way and then another, trying to find a softer spot in their saddles. Girghis Effendi declared that his back was broken, and Major Bowker replied that his legs were completely paralyzed.

Hassan's head began to ache, and he longed to jump down and run along beside his camel. He drooped in his saddle and his hands held the reins loosely. And still the desert stretched out on every side, and as far as he could see there was no end to the journey.

At last the sun dropped down to touch the rim of the desert, the sky was all ablaze with crimson

and orange, and the light was reflected on the sand until the whole world seemed to be on fire.

In the shelter of a long low ridge the Bedouin camel-drivers made their camp for the night, and the weary riders slipped out of their saddles and walked about to rest their aching limbs.

Bundles of chopped straw and bags of beans were spread out on the ground, and the camels crouched around in a circle, munching the dry fodder. As there is no grass in Egypt, there is, of course, no hay; but the camels seemed contented with their supper of beans and straw.

One of the boys built a fire with a bundle of dry twigs, and the cook made coffee and heated some soup.

As soon as they had finished eating their supper, Hassan wrapped himself up in a blanket and lay down on the ground. It was cold, and a light breeze swept over the sand. It was dark, too, and still, — oh, so very still! He could almost hear his own heart beating as he lay there looking up at the star-spangled sky.

In a little while he fell asleep. Towards midnight he was wakened by the wild cry of a jackal and the soft footfalls of a fleeing gazelle; but he was asleep again in a moment and did not stir until the east was red with the dawn of a new day.

Almost before it was light a little fire was blazing

merrily on the sand, the cook was making coffee, and the camels were being fed. In less than an hour after sunrise the whole caravan was ready for another day's journey toward the distant oasis, — another day of sand and sun and silence.

They rode again for hours over the glaring sand, until at last the desert swam before their eyes in a blur of golden light.

Suddenly Hassan rose up in his saddle and pointed toward a distant diadem of hills.

"Effendi," he shouted, "it is the Fayoum! I can see the canal and the grove of date-palms. I can see my father's house and the tall pigeon towers beyond the courtyard. Effendi, look; it is the Bahr Yusuf shining in the sun!"

Major Bowker looked where Hassan pointed. "It is a mirage," he said wearily, "nothing but a mirage. There isn't a drop of water for fifty miles."

But the artist rode quickly to the boy's side. He, too, saw a vision of the oasis of roses. It was the month of Ramadan and he was dining in the house of a Moslem who had a son, a boy whom he dearly loved.

"Yes, yes," he said eagerly, "your home is in the Fayoum, and you are the son of Ibrahim Ali. Your name is Hassan and you have a little sister —"

"Amina!" cried the boy, and he burst into a flood of tears.

They calmed him and questioned him, and it all came back quite clearly. He remembered everything, — his home in the Fayoum, his uncle's house in Cairo, his lessons in El-Azhar, even his swim in the Nile River.

When he had told the whole story, Girghis Effendi called for the leader of the caravan and made plans for the return journey. "We will turn back at once," he said. "We can reach Karnak to-morrow in time to take the night train for Cairo; and then, before another sunset, you will be once more in your uncle's house."

CHAPTER XVII

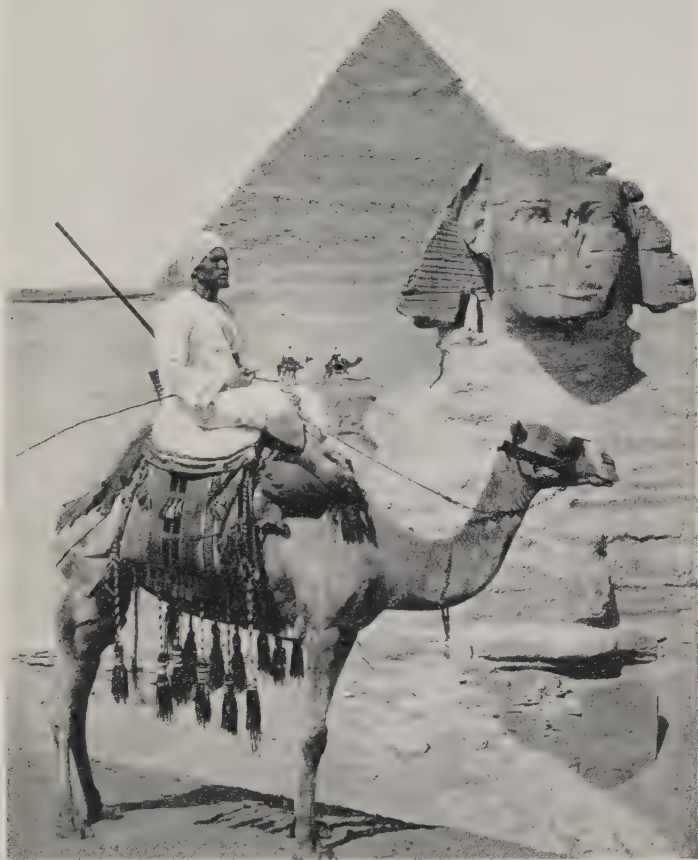
PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT

"IF I had Aladdin's lamp, I would rub it hard and make a wish to see my father and mother," Hassan told Girghis Effendi, as they finished their breakfast in the train the next morning.

"And if you had Aladdin's magic carpet, I suppose you would fly off to Mecca to meet them," suggested the artist.

"Effendi, yes," replied the boy earnestly. "I would fly and fly until I found them. Then I would tell my father how good you have been to me, and I would beg him to let me go to the English schools in Cairo, so that I could learn to help my country the way the English people have helped it."

"We'll see what your father says about the English schools when he comes back to Cairo," said Girghis Effendi; "but just now you must be thinking about this ride we are having together. Aladdin would have thought the boats that go steaming up the Nile and the trains that go whizzing across the desert were just as wonderful as his magic carpet."



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THE PYRAMID OF CHEOPS AND THE SPHINX

Page 103

"I never rode in a railway train but once before," said Hassan. "That was when I went to Cairo with my father."

"And now you are going to Cairo with me, and when Major Bowker gets there, and you have had a good visit with your uncle, perhaps you can go sight-seeing with us again. I want to see Sakkara once more; and then there are the pyramids and the Sphinx. We must surely see them again before the major goes back to England."

Hassan looked up quickly. "You will not go back to England, will you?" he begged. "Effendi, surely you will wait until my father comes home from Mecca. I can never go to school again and sit all day on the floor studying the Koran."

"Cheer up, Rameses Bey," said the artist gaily. "There are all sorts of good times ahead of you. Look, there are some cranes. Cross your fingers and wish that they may fly away with all your bad luck." He pointed, as he spoke, to a flock of long-legged birds that were wading in the shallow water on the edge of the river, and as the train whizzed them out of sight Hassan made a motion of tossing his bad luck back to them.

"There," he said with a laugh, "that's the end of losing my clothes and forgetting my name and worrying my aunt and uncle. Now I'm going to wish that you will live in Egypt forever."

"I shouldn't want to live here forever if I had to travel in these trains very often," replied his friend, brushing off the powdery sand that sifted into the car, even though the doors and ventilators and the two sets of windows were all tightly closed. "In England we could travel with our windows open and not get half so much dust as this."

"Tell me about England," Hassan urged.

"I'm afraid you wouldn't like it very well," the artist told him. "You would miss the cloudless sky, and the golden sunshine, and the happy out-of-door life; but you might like to see a snow-storm."

"In the north of England it sometimes snows for hours at a time. The wind blows the snowflakes into great drifts, just as it blows the sand in the desert, and there are pretty wave-marks in the snow like those we saw in the sand."

"Does the snow drift over the tracks the way the sand does?" questioned Hassan, as they passed a gang of laborers who were working with shovels and baskets to clear away a deep sand-drift from the track.

"The sand is much worse than the snow," replied Girghis Effendi. "It is easy enough to lay railroad tracks here in Egypt; but it takes hundreds of men, working all the time, to keep them clear."

“It is winter in England now,” he added, “and there they are having ice and snow and cold gray skies, while here the air is filled with the sweetness of spring.”

“Do you see those women over there in that green field?” questioned Hassan, pointing to some girls who were jumping up and down and waving their arms.

“Yes,” replied the artist, “what do you suppose they are doing?”

“They are screaming to frighten the pigeons away from the young millet. I have often seen them doing it in my father’s fields at home,” said the boy, and a sad look came into his eyes as he thought how long it would be before they would all be together again, back in the Fayoum.

But railway trains in Egypt reach their journey’s end just as surely as did the magic carpet in the days of Aladdin, and toward night Hassan was standing with Girghis Effendi in front of his uncle’s green and red door.

“Cheer up, Rameses Bey,” whispered Girghis Effendi again. “They will be so glad to see you that they will forget to scold you for running away.”

Then the door opened, and the black porter, who had let Hassan in with his father, let him in again. But this time he lifted up his voice in a

great shout: — “ Ibrahim Ali! Master! O, Ibrahim Ali! Come and see your son. He is alive. Come, Ibrahim Ali! ”

Girghis Effendi and Hassan looked at each other in amazement. What could the man mean? Ibrahim Ali had gone to Mecca and would not return for many weeks.

But they followed the servant through the long corridor to the courtyard, and there, sure enough, stood Ibrahim Ali beside his brother Yusuf. And as the porter sent up his great shout again, down the stairs from the harem scampered Amina, and behind her came the pretty girl-mother and the lame aunt, all three hurriedly catching up a corner of their robes to hide their faces, but looking with eager eyes to see the meaning of the outcry.

Then there was great rejoicing in the courtyard, for Egyptian hearts are just like other hearts all the world over. Everyone talked at once. Hassan told about his swim in the Nile and the blow on his head, and Girghis Effendi told how the mirage in the desert had brought back the boy's memory.

Yusuf Ali told how he had searched the city, and how the water-boy had brought back the shoes and tunic; and Ibrahim Ali told how a messenger had come from Cairo to tell him of the loss of his son, and how he had given up his pilgrimage and turned back at once.

"It was only yesterday that we reached Cairo," Hassan's mother told him. "It was a sad, sad journey. Your father was broken-hearted and little Amina wept until she was ill."

At last Ibrahim Ali drew Hassan to his side and held him close while he turned to thank the Englishman for all that he had done for the boy. But at that moment there came through the still evening air the muezzin's nightfall call to prayer, and immediately all the faces were turned toward Mecca and all the hearts sent up a prayer of thanksgiving, while the lips murmured: "Allah is good! Allah is great! There is no god but Allah!"

While the heads were bowed in prayer, Girghis Effendi slipped quietly away, leaving the happy family alone to rejoice over the new-found son.

He came again, however, the next day and the next, to see little Rameses Bey, and he had a long talk with Ibrahim Ali about the boy's education.

But when he came on the third day it was to say that Major Bowker had just received a telegram calling him back to England.

"He starts to-morrow, and I shall go with him," the artist said. When he saw the look of disappointment on Hassan's face, he added quickly: "To-day we will all go to see the pyramids together, and we'll have such a good time that you will forget to think of missing me."

And Hassan did have a good time, — such a good time! How could he help it with the four men all doing their best to make him happy?

They walked across the city together, stopping to buy dates and oranges and roses from the street venders. They crossed the great Nile bridge, and they found seats together in the electric tram which was waiting to take passengers to the pyramids.

It was a glorious day of golden sunshine, and the spreading acacia trees that lined the roadway arched overhead to make a pleasant shade. The fields on either side, which had been flooded at High Nile, were already green with wheat and clover, and the road was filled with a procession of donkeys and camels, carriages and automobiles, men and women.

They passed a boy with a flock of turkeys, a man driving a herd of goats into the city to be milked, and a shepherd guiding his flock and carrying a tired lamb on his shoulders.

Then, suddenly, between the trees, they caught a glimpse of three of the pyramids, and in a moment everything else was forgotten, for of all the wonders of the world none are more wonderful than these hand-made mountains of stone.

There are seventy-six pyramids in Egypt; but the most famous of them all are the Pyramids of



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THE ROAD TO THE GREAT PYRAMIDS

"Spreading acacia trees line the roadway." Page 108

Gizeh. They stand on a broad shelf of the desert, only eight miles from Cairo, three great tombs of three great kings who lived and died more than five thousand years ago.

Hassan clambered to the top of the largest pyramid, the one that was built by Cheops nearly four thousand years before the birth of Christ, and Girghis Effendi went along with him while the others wandered about in the ruins of an ancient temple.

Then, after they had eaten their lunch, it was the artist who led the way to the Sphinx, that enormous figure with a man's head and a lion's body, which has lain half-buried in the golden sand longer than any man can tell.

As Hassan stood looking at the calm, majestic face, the artist climbed up to lay his rose before the Sphinx.

"It is said that Joseph and Mary halted here on their flight into Egypt," he told the boy, "and that Mary laid the little Child Jesus down to sleep between the great stone paws. Even then the Sphinx was so old that no one knew its story. It had been here for centuries when the pyramids were built. In all ages men have come to question its mystery; but no one has ever yet received an answer."

"I asked the Sphinx a question, but I am

afraid it will be a long time before I know the answer," said Hassan, as they went back to join the others.

"What was your question?"

"I asked if you would surely come back to Egypt," replied the boy.

For answer Girghis Effendi beckoned to a pretty girl who had just come up with a kullah of water. Taking the brimming cup from her hand, he held it high above his head.

"What is your proverb, little Rameses Bey?" he asked.

Then he raised the cup to his lips and drank the sweet cool water, while a smile of happiness broke over Hassan's face as he repeated aloud the old Arab proverb, "He who drinks Nile water will return."

PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY AND DICTIONARY

A bou (ä' bō), father.

Al lah (äl' ä), God.

A mi na (ä mē' nā), a girl's name.

As si out (äs sē ōt'), a city and province in Upper Egypt.

As suan (äs swän'), a town and province in Upper Egypt.

Bähr, river.

Bai ram (bī' rām), a Mohammedan festival. The Lesser Bairam is held at the close of the fast of Ramadan, the Greater Bairam seventy days later.

băk'shēesh, a present of money ; a fee ; alms.

Bed ou in (bēd' ō in), a wandering Arab of the desert.

Bey (bā), a title of courtesy.

Bu lăk' (bō), the port of Cairo.

căf'tăn, a long gown fastened with a girdle, and having long, loose sleeves.

Cai'rō (kī), the capital of Egypt, situated one mile east of the Nile.

Che ops (kē' ōps), an Egyptian king. He lived about 3700 B. C., and built the greatest pyramid in Egypt.

Cōpt, an Egyptian of the native race. The Copts are Christians. The Arabs are Mohammedans.

dă hă bē' âh, a house-boat used on the Nile.

drăg' ō măn, an interpreter ; a guide.

ěf fěn'dī, master ; sir ; a title of respect.

ěl-A zhar (ä zăr'), a mosque built in Cairo in 973 and used as a University since 988.

- Fa youm** (fi w̄m'), a province of Egypt southwest of Cairo. It is well watered and very fertile.
- fě'l'lah**, plural, fellaheen ; a peasant.
- fě lŭc'cà**, a narrow, lateen-sailed boat.
- fŭd'dàh**, one-fortieth of a piaster ; one-eighth of a cent.
- ge nii** (jě' nī), spirits ; demons, sometimes subject to magic control.
- Gi zeh** (gě' zě), a province of Egypt.
- Gĩr'ghīs**, George.
- hā'rēm**, the part of the house allotted to the women in a Mohammedan residence.
- hī ēr ō glyph' ics** (glīf), picture-writing of the ancient Egyptians.
- Ī brā'hīm**, Abraham.
- Ī'sīs**, an Egyptian goddess.
- it'neīn**, two.
- jīnn**, demons of the wilderness, more or less subject to magic control.
- Kā**, double.
- Kāa'bā**, a cube-shaped, flat-roofed building in the center of the Great Mosque at Mecca.
- Kār'nāk**, a village on the Nile in Upper Egypt ; part of the site of ancient Thebes.
- Khār'gā**, an oasis in the Libyan Desert.
- khe dīve** (kě dēv'), the viceroy, or governor, of Egypt.
- Kō rān'**, the scriptures of the Mohammedans.
- kul'lāh** (kōōl), a water-jar.
- lā tēen'**, a sail in the shape of a right-angled triangle.
- Lux or** (lŭk' sōr), a village on the Nile, the site of ancient Thebes.

mäh'mäl, a richly-decorated litter carried on the pilgrimages to Mecca.

Mēc'cā, in Arabia, the holy city of the Mohammedans.

Mēm'phis (fīs), a capital of ancient Egypt.

mīn'à rēt, a slender, lofty tower attached to a mosque, from which the summons to prayer is cried by the muezzin.

mi rage (mē räzh'), a reflected image seen in deserts or on the ocean.

Mō hām'mēd, the founder of Mohammedanism, born at Mecca about 570.

Mōs'lēm, a true believer in the Mohammedan faith.

mosque (mōsk), a Mohammedan place of public worship.

mū ēz'zīn, a Mohammedan crier of the hours of prayer.

mūm'my, a body preserved for burial.

ō ā'sīs, plural, oases ; a fertile spot in a desert.

Ō sī'rīs, an Egyptian god.

pal an quin (pāl ān kēen'), a box-like litter, borne on the back of a camel, or on the shoulders of men by means of poles.

Pha raoh (fā'rō), a title of the rulers of ancient Egypt.

pī ās'tēr, a silver coin worth about five cents.

Rām ā dān', the ninth month of the Mohammedan year, on each day of which, from sunrise to sunset, a strict fast is kept.

Rām'ē sēs, the name of a number of Egyptian kings, the most noted being Rameses II., 1324-1258 B. C.

Sā hā'rā, a great desert in Northern Africa.

sāk'kā, a water-carrier.

Sāk kā'rā, a village near the ruins of ancient Memphis.

sa ki yeh (sä kē'yā), a water-wheel.

scār'āb, a beetle; the ancient Egyptians carved bits of stone in the shape of these beetles and used them as charms and talismans.

sheik (shēk), chief, elder; a title of respect; the head man of the tribe or village.

Shaw wal (shô wôl'), the tenth month in the Moham-medan year.

Su dan (sōo dān'), a vast region in Central Africa.

Sphinx (sfīnks), a huge stone image near the pyramids of Gizeh. It is 172 feet long, and has a man's head and a lion's body.

tā lā'tēh, three.

Thebes (thēbz), an ancient city on the Nile, now in ruins.

Thyi (ti), a king of ancient Egypt.

tū'nīc, a loose garment, with or without sleeves.

wā'hīd, one.

Yū' suf (sōof), Joseph.

LITTLE PEOPLE

A red line drawing illustration of six children. In the back row, from left to right: a boy in a wide-brimmed hat, a girl in a polka-dot dress, a girl in a high-collared dress, a girl in a kimono holding a large folding fan, and a boy in a pointed hat and a tunic with a brooch. In the front row, a boy in a fedora-style hat is kneeling on the left, looking down at something in his hands. The children are positioned around a large rectangular sign.

MANUEL IN MEXICO

UMÉ SAN IN JAPAN

RAFAEL IN ITALY

KATHLEEN IN IRELAND

FRITZ IN GERMANY

GERDA IN SWEDEN

EVERYWHERE.

